

THE DIAL

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OUT OF NOWHERE INTO NOTHING

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ROSALIND WESTCOTT, a tall strong-looking woman of twenty-seven, was walking on the railroad track near the town of Willow Springs, Iowa. It was about four in the afternoon of a day in August, and the third day since she had come home to her native town from Chicago, where she was employed.

At that time Willow Springs was a town of about three thousand people. It has grown since. There was a public square with the town hall in the centre and about the four sides of the square and facing it were the merchandising establishments. The public square was bare and grassless, and out of it ran streets of frame houses, long straight streets that finally became country roads running away into the flat prairie country.

Although she had told everyone that she had merely come home for a short visit because she was a little homesick, and although she wanted in particular to have a talk with her mother in regard to a certain matter, Rosalind had been unable to talk with any one. Indeed she had found it difficult to stay in the house with her mother and father and all the time, day and night, she was haunted by a desire to get out of town. As she went along the railroad tracks in the hot afternoon sunshine she kept scolding herself. "I've grown moody and no good. If I want to do it, why don't I just go ahead and not make a fuss," she thought.

For two miles the railroad tracks, eastward out of Willow Springs, went through corn fields on a flat plain. Then there was a little dip in the land and a bridge over Willow Creek. The Creek was altogether dry now, but trees grew along the edge of the grey

streak of cracked mud that in the fall, winter, and spring would be the bed of the stream. Rosalind left the tracks and went to sit under one of the trees. Her cheeks were flushed and her forehead wet. When she took off her hat her hair fell down in disorder and strands of it clung to her hot wet face. She sat in what seemed a kind of great bowl on the sides of which the corn grew rank. Before her and following the bed of the stream there was a dusty path along which cows came at evening from distant pastures. A great pancake formed of cow dung lay near by. It was covered with grey dust and over it crawled shiny black beetles. They were rolling the dung into balls and with head down and pushing with powerful hind legs hurried away with their prizes. Out of death life came. The stone the builders rejected—

Rosalind had come on the visit to her home town at a time of the year when everyone wished he could escape from the hot dusty place. No one had expected her and she had not written to announce her coming. One hot morning in Chicago she had got out of bed and had suddenly begun packing her bag, and on that same evening there she was in Willow Springs, in the house where she had lived until her twenty-first year, among her own people. She had come up from the station in the hotel bus and had walked into the Wescott house unannounced. Her father was at the pump by the kitchen door and her mother came into the living-room to greet her, wearing a soiled kitchen apron. Everything in the house was just as it always had been. "I just thought I would come home for a few days," she said, putting down her bag and kissing her mother.

Ma and Pa Wescott had been glad to see their daughter. On the evening of her arrival they were excited and a special supper was prepared. After supper Pa Wescott went up-town as usual, but he stayed only a few minutes. "I just want to run to the post office and get the evening paper," he said apologetically. Rosalind's mother put on a clean dress and they all sat in the darkness on the front porch. There was talk, of a kind. "Is it hot in Chicago now? I'm going to do a good deal of canning this fall. I thought later I would send you a box of canned fruit. Do you live in the same place on the North Side? It must be nice in the evening to be able to walk down to the park by the lake."

Rosalind sat under the tree near the railroad bridge two miles from Willow Springs and watched the tumble bugs at work. Her whole body was hot from the walk in the sun and the thin dress she wore clung to her legs. It was being soiled by the dust on the grass under the tree.

She had run away from town and from her mother's house. All during the three days of her visit she had been doing that. She did not go from house to house to visit her old schoolgirl friends, the girls who unlike herself had stayed in Willow Springs, had got married and settled down there. When she saw one of these women on the street in the morning, pushing a baby carriage and perhaps followed by a small child, she stopped. There was a few minutes of talk. "It's hot. Do you live in the same place in Chicago? My husband and I hope to take the children and go away for a week or two. It must be nice in Chicago where you are so near the lake." Rosalind hurried away.

All the hours of her visit to her mother and to her home town had been spent in an effort to hurry away.

From what? Rosalind defended herself. There was something she had come from Chicago hoping to be able to say to her mother. Did she really want to talk with her about things? Had she thought, by again breathing the air of her home town, to get strength to face life and its difficulties?

There was no point in her taking the hot uncomfortable trip from Chicago only to spend her days walking in dusty country roads or between rows of corn fields in the stifling heat along the railroad tracks. "I must have hoped. There is a hope that cannot be fulfilled," she thought vaguely.

Willow Springs was a rather meaningless, dreary town, one of thousands of such towns in Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, Kansas, Iowa, but her mind made it more dreary.

She sat under the tree by the dry bed of Willow Creek thinking of the street in town where her mother and father lived, where she had lived until she had become a woman. It was only because of a series of circumstances she did not live there now. Her one brother, ten years older than herself, had married and moved to Chicago. He had asked her to come for a visit and after she got to the city she stayed. Her brother was a travelling salesman and

spent a good deal of time away from home. "Why don't you stay here with Bess and learn stenography?" he asked. "If you don't want to use it you don't have to. Dad can look out for you all right. I just thought you might like to learn."

"That was six years ago," Rosalind thought wearily. "I've been a city woman for six years." Her mind hopped about. Thoughts came and went. In the city, after she became a stenographer, something for a time awakened her. She wanted to be an actress and went in the evening to a dramatic school. In an office where she worked there was a young man, a clerk. They went out together, to the theatre or to walk in the park in the evening. They kissed.

Her thoughts came sharply back to her mother and father, to her home in Willow Springs, to the street in which she had lived until her twenty-first year.

It was but an end of a street. From the windows at the front of her mother's house six other houses could be seen. How well she knew the street and the people in the houses! Did she know them? From her eighteenth and until her twenty-first year she had stayed at home, helping her mother with the housework, waiting for something. Other young women in town waited just as she did. They like herself had graduated from the town high school and their parents had no intention of sending them away to college. There was nothing to do but wait. Some of the young women—their mothers and their mothers' friends still spoke of them as girls—had young men friends who came to see them on Sunday and perhaps also on Wednesday or Thursday evenings. Others joined the church, went to prayer meetings, became active members of some church organization. They fussed about.

Rosalind had done none of these things. All through those three trying years in Willow Springs she had just waited. In the morning there was the work to do in the house and then, in some way, the day wore itself away. In the evening her father went up-town and she sat with her mother. Nothing much was said. After she had gone to bed she lay awake, strangely nervous, eager for something to happen that never would happen. The noises of the Wescott house cut across her thoughts. What things went through her mind!

There was a procession of people always going away from her.

Sometimes she lay on her belly at the edge of a ravine. Well, it was not a ravine. It had two walls of marble and on the marble face of the walls strange figures were carved. Broad steps led down—always down and away. People walked along the steps, between the marble walls, going down and away from her.

What people—who were they—where did they come from—where were they going? She was not asleep but wide awake. Her bedroom was dark. The walls and ceiling of the room receded. She seemed to hang suspended in space, above the ravine—the ravine with walls of white marble over which strange beautiful lights played.

The people who went down the broad steps and away into infinite distance—they were men and women. Sometimes a young girl, like herself but in some way sweeter and purer than herself, passed alone. The young girl walked with a swinging stride, going swiftly and freely like a beautiful young animal. Her legs and arms were like the slender top branches of trees swaying in a gentle wind. She also went down and away.

Others followed along the marble steps. Young boys walked alone. A dignified old man followed by a sweet-faced woman passed. What a remarkable man! One felt infinite power in his old frame. There were deep wrinkles in his face and his eyes were sad. One felt he knew everything about life but had kept something very precious alive in himself. It was that precious thing that made the eyes of the woman who followed him burn with a strange fire. They also went down along the steps and away.

Down and away along the steps went others—how many others, men and women, boys and girls, single old men, old women who leaned on sticks and hobbled along.

In the bed in her father's house as she lay awake Rosalind's head grew light. She tried to clutch at something, understand something.

She couldn't. The noises of the house cut across her waking dream. Her father was at the pump by the kitchen door. He was pumping a pail of water. In a moment he would bring it into the house and put it on a box by the kitchen sink. A little of the water would slop over on the floor. There would be a sound like a child's bare foot striking the floor. Then her father would go to wind the clock. The day was done. Presently there would be the

sound of his heavy feet on the floor of the bedroom above and he would get into bed to lie beside Rosalind's mother.

The night noise of her father's house had been in some way terrible to the girl in the years when she was becoming a woman. After chance had taken her to the city she never wanted to think of them again. Even in Chicago where the silence of night was cut and slashed by a thousand noises, by automobiles whirling through the streets, by the belated footsteps of men homeward bound along the cement sidewalks after midnight, by the shouts of quarrelling men drunk on summer nights, even in the great hubbub of noises there was comparative quiet. The insistent clanging noises of the city nights were not like the homely insistent noises of her father's house. Certain terrible truths about life did not abide in them, they did not cling so closely to life and did not frighten as did the noises in the one house on the quiet street in the town of Willow Springs. How often there in the city, in the midst of the great noises she had fought to escape the little noises! Her father's feet were on the steps leading into the kitchen. Now he was putting the pail of water on the box by the kitchen sink. Upstairs her mother's body fell heavily into bed. The vision of the great marble-lined ravine down along which went the beautiful people flew away. There was the little slap of water on the kitchen floor. It was like a child's bare foot striking the floor. Rosalind wanted to cry out. Her father closed the kitchen door. Now he was winding the clock. In a moment his feet would be on the stairs—

There were six houses to be seen from the windows of the Wescott house. In the winter smoke from six brick chimneys went up into the sky. There was one house, the next one to the Wescott's place, a small frame affair, in which lived a man who was thirty-five years old when Rosalind became a woman of twenty-one and went away to the city. The man was unmarried and his mother, who had been his housekeeper, had died during the year in which Rosalind graduated from the high school. After that the man lived alone. He took his dinner and supper at the hotel, down-town on the square, but he got his own breakfast, made his own bed, and swept out his own house. Sometimes he walked slowly along the street past the Wescott house when Rosalind sat alone on the front porch. He raised his hat and spoke to her. Their eyes met. He had a long, hawk-like nose and his hair was long and uncombed.

Rosalind thought about him sometimes. It bothered her a little that he sometimes went stealing softly, as though not to disturb her, across her day-time fancies.

As she sat that day by the dry creek-bed Rosalind thought about the bachelor, who had now passed the age of forty and who lived on the street where she had lived during her girlhood. His house was separated from the Wescott house by a picket fence. Sometimes in the morning he forgot to pull his blinds and Rosalind, busy with the housework in her father's house, had seen him walking about in his underwear. It was—uh, one could not think of it.

The man's name was Melville Stoner. He had a small income and did not have to work. On some days he did not leave his house to go to the hotel for his meals but sat all day in a chair with his nose buried in a book.

There was a house on the street occupied by a widow who raised chickens. Two or three of her hens were what the people who lived on the street called "high fliers." They flew over the fence of the chicken yard and escaped and almost always they came at once into the yard of the bachelor. The neighbours laughed about it. It was significant, they felt. When the hens had come into the yard of the bachelor, Stoner, the widow with a stick in her hand ran after them. Melville Stoner came out of his house and stood on a little porch in front. The widow ran through the front gate waving her arms wildly and the hens made a great racket and flew over the fence. They ran down the street toward the widow's house. For a moment she stood by the Stoner gate. In the summer-time when the windows of the Wescott house were open Rosalind could hear what the man and woman said to each other. In Willow Springs it was not thought proper for an unmarried woman to stand talking to an unmarried man near the door of his bachelor establishment. The widow wanted to observe the conventions. Still she did linger a moment, her bare arm resting on the gate post. What bright eager little eyes she had! "If those hens of mine bother you I wish you would catch them and kill them," she said fiercely. "I am always glad to see them coming along the road," Melville Stoner replied, bowing. Rosalind thought he was making fun of the widow. She liked him for that. "I'd never see you if you did not have to come here after your hens. Don't let anything happen to them," he said, bowing again.

For a moment the man and woman lingered looking into each other's eyes. Rosalind, from one of the windows of the Wescott house, watched the woman. Nothing more was said. There was something about the woman she had not understood—well, the widow's senses were being fed. The developing woman in the house next door had hated her.

Rosalind jumped up from under the tree and climbed up the railroad embankment. She thanked the gods that she had been lifted out of the life of the town of Willow Springs and that chance had set her down to live in a city. "Chicago is far from beautiful. People say it is just a big noisy dirty village and perhaps that's what it is, but there is something alive there," she thought. In Chicago, or at least during the last two or three years of her life there, Rosalind felt she had learned a little something of life. She had read books, for one thing, such books as did not come to Willow Springs, books that Willow Springs knew nothing about, she had gone to hear the Symphony Orchestra, she had begun to understand something of the possibility of line and colour, had heard intelligent understanding men speak of these things. In Chicago, in the midst of the twisting squirming millions of men and women, there were voices. One occasionally saw men or at least heard of the existence of men who, like the beautiful old man who had walked away down the marble stairs in the vision of her girlhood nights, had kept some precious thing alive in themselves.

And there was something else—it was the most important thing of all. For the last two years of her life in Chicago she had spent hours, days in the presence of a man to whom she could talk. The talks had awakened her. She felt they had made her a woman, had matured her.

"I know what these people here in Willow Springs are like and what I would have been like had I stayed here," she thought. She felt relieved and almost happy. She had come home at a crisis of her own life hoping to be able to talk a little with her mother, or if talk proved impossible hoping to get some sense of sisterhood by being in her presence. She had thought there was something buried away, deep within every woman, that at a certain call would run out to other women. Now she felt that the hope, the dream, the desire she had cherished was altogether futile. Sitting in the great

flat bowl in the midst of the corn lands two miles from her home town where no breath of air stirred and seeing the beetles at their work of preparing to propagate a new generation of beetles, while she thought of the town and its people, had settled something for her. Her visit to Willow Springs had come to something after all.

Rosalind's figure had still much of the spring and swing of youth in it. Her legs were strong and her shoulders broad. She went swinging along the railroad track towards town, going westwards. The sun had begun to fall rapidly down the sky. Away over the tops of the corn in one of the great fields she could see in the distance to where a man was driving a motor along a dusty road. The wheels of the car kicked up dust through which the sunlight played. The floating cloud of dust became a shower of gold that settled down over the fields. "When a woman most wants what is best and truest in another woman, even in her own mother, she isn't likely to find it," she thought grimly. "There are certain things every woman has to find out for herself, there is a road she must travel alone. It may only lead to some more ugly and terrible place, but if she doesn't want death to overtake her and live within her while her body is still alive she must set out on that road."

Rosalind walked for a mile along the railroad track and then stopped. A freight train had gone eastwards as she sat under the tree by the creek-bed and now, there beside the tracks, in the grass was the body of a man. It lay still, the face buried in the deep burnt grass. At once she concluded the man had been struck and killed by the train. The body had been thrown thus aside. All her thoughts went away and she turned and started to tiptoe away, stepping carefully along the railroad ties, making no noise. Then she stopped again. The man in the grass might not be dead, only hurt, terribly hurt. It would not do to leave him there. She imagined him mutilated but still struggling for life and herself trying to help him. She crept back along the ties. The man's legs were not twisted and beside him lay his hat. It was as though he had put it there before lying down to sleep, but a man did not sleep with his face buried in the grass in such a hot uncomfortable place. She drew nearer. "Oh, you Mister," she called, "Oh, you—are you hurt?"

The man in the grass sat up and looked at her. He laughed. It was Melville Stoner, the man of whom she had just been thinking

and in thinking of whom she had come to certain settled conclusions regarding the futility of her visit to Willow Springs. He got to his feet and picked up his hat. "Well, hello, Miss Rosalind Westcott," he said heartily. He climbed a small embankment and stood beside her. "I knew you were at home on a visit but what are you doing out here?" he asked and then added, "what luck this is! Now I shall have the privilege of walking home with you. You can hardly refuse to let me walk with you after shouting at me like that."

They walked together along the tracks, he with his hat in his hand. Rosalind thought he looked like a gigantic bird, an aged bird, "perhaps a vulture," she thought. For a time he was silent and then he began to talk, explaining his lying with his face buried in the grass. There was a twinkle in his eyes and Rosalind wondered if he was laughing at her as she had seen him laugh at the widow who owned the hens.

He did not come directly to the point and Rosalind thought it strange that they should walk and talk together. At once his words interested her. He was so much older than herself, and no doubt wiser. How vain she had been to think herself so much more knowing than all the people of Willow Springs. Here was this man and he was talking and his talk did not sound like anything she had ever expected to hear from the lips of a native of her home town. "I want to explain myself but we'll wait a little. For years I've been wanting to get at you, to talk with you, and this is my chance. You've been away now five or six years and have grown into womanhood.

"You understand it is nothing specially personal, my wanting to get at you and understand you a little," he added quickly. "I'm that way about everyone. Perhaps that's the reason I live alone, why I've never married or had personal friends. I'm too eager. It isn't comfortable to others to have me about."

Rosalind was caught up by this new viewpoint of the man. She wondered. In the distance along the tracks the houses of the town came into sight. Melville Stoner tried to walk on one of the iron rails but after a few steps lost his balance and fell off. His long arms whirled about. A strange intensity of mood and feeling had come over Rosalind. In one moment Melville Stoner was like an old man and then he was like a boy. Being with him

made her mind, that had been racing all afternoon, race faster than ever.

When he began to talk again he seemed to have forgotten the explanation he had intended making. "We've lived side by side but we've hardly spoken to each other," he said. "When I was a young man and you were a girl I used to sit in the house thinking of you. We've really been friends. What I mean is we've had the same thoughts."

He began to speak of life in the city where she had been living, condemning it. "It's dull and stupid here but in the city you have your own kind of stupidity too," he declared. "I'm glad I do not live there."

In Chicago when she had first gone there to live a thing had sometimes happened that had startled Rosalind. She knew no one but her brother and his wife and was sometimes very lonely. When she could no longer bear the eternal sameness of the talk in her brother's house she went out to a concert or to the theatre. Once or twice when she had no money to buy a theatre ticket she grew bold and walked alone in the streets, going rapidly along without looking to the right or left. As she sat in the theatre or walked in the street an odd thing sometimes happened. Someone spoke her name, a call came to her. The thing happened at a concert and she looked quickly about. All the faces in sight had that peculiar, half-bored, half-expectant expression one grows accustomed to seeing on the faces of people listening to music. In the entire theatre no one seemed aware of her. On the street or in the park the call had come when she was utterly alone. It seemed to come out of the air, from behind a tree in the park.

And now as she walked on the railroad tracks with Melville Stoner the call seemed to come from him. He walked along apparently absorbed with his own thought, the thought he was trying to find words to express. His legs were long and he walked with a queer loping gait. The idea of some great bird, perhaps a sea bird stranded far inland, stayed in Rosalind's mind, but the call did not come from the bird part of him. There was something else, another personality hidden away. Rosalind fancied the call came this time from a young boy, from such another clear-eyed boy as she had once seen in her waking dreams at night in her father's house, from one of the boys who walked on the marble stairway,

walked down and away. A thought came that startled her. "The boy is hidden away in the body of this strange bird-like man," she told herself. The thought awoke fancies within her. It explained much in the lives of men and women. An expression, a phrase, remembered from her childhood when she had gone to Sunday School in Willow Springs, came back to her mind. "And God spoke to me out of a burning bush." She almost said the words aloud.

Melville Stoner loped along, walking on the railroad ties and talking. He seemed to have forgotten the incident of his lying with his nose buried in the grass and was explaining his life lived alone in the house in town. Rosalind tried to put her own thoughts aside and to listen to his words but did not succeed very well. "I came home here hoping to get a little closer to life, to get, for a few days, out of the company of a man so I could think about him. I fancied I could get what I wanted by being near mother but that hasn't worked. It would be strange if I got what I am looking for by this chance meeting with another man," she thought. Her mind went on recording thoughts. She heard the spoken words of the man beside her but her own mind went on, also making words. Something within herself felt suddenly relaxed and free. Ever since she had got off the train at Willow Springs three days before, there had been a great tenseness. Now it was all gone. She looked at Melville Stoner who occasionally looked at her. There was something in his eyes, a kind of laughter—a mocking kind of laughter. His eyes were grey, of a cold greyness, like the eyes of a bird.

"It has come into my mind—I have been thinking—well you see you have not married in the six years since you went to live in the city. It would be strange and a little amusing if you are like myself, if you cannot marry or come close to any other person," he was saying.

Again he spoke of the life he led in his house. "I sometimes sit in my house all day, even when the weather is fine outside," he said. "You have no doubt seen me sitting there. Sometimes I forget to eat. I read books all day, striving to forget myself and then night comes and I cannot sleep.

"If I could write or paint or make music, if I cared at all about expressing what goes on in my mind it would be different. How-

ever, I would not write as others do. I would have but little to say about what people do. What do they do? In what way does it matter? Well, you see they build cities such as you live in and towns like Willow Springs, they have built this railroad track on which we are walking, they marry and raise children, commit murders, steal, do kindly acts. What does it matter? You see we are walking here in the hot sun. In five minutes more we will be in town and you will go to your house and I to mine. You will eat supper with your father and mother. Then your father will go up-town and you and your mother will sit together on the front porch. There will be little said. Your mother will speak of her intention to can fruit. Then your father will come home and you will all go to bed. Your father will pump a pail of water at the pump by the kitchen door. He will carry it indoors and put it on a box by the kitchen sink. A little of the water will be spilled. It will make a soft little slap on the kitchen floor—

"Ha!" Melville Stoner turned and looked sharply at Rosalind who had grown a little pale. Her mind raced madly, like an engine out of control. There was a kind of power in Melville Stoner that frightened her. By the recital of a few commonplace facts he had suddenly invaded her secret places. It was almost as though he had come into the bedroom in her father's house where she lay thinking. He had in fact got into her bed. He laughed again, an unmirthful laugh. "I'll tell you what, we know little enough here in America, either in the towns or in the cities," he said rapidly. "We are all on the rush. We are all for action. I sit still and think. If I wanted to write I'd do something. I'd tell what everyone thought. It would startle people, frighten them a little, eh? I would tell you what you have been thinking this afternoon while you walked here on this railroad track with me. I would tell you what your mother has been thinking at the same time and what she would like to say to you."

Rosalind's face had grown chalky white and her hands trembled. They got off the railroad tracks and into the streets of Willow Springs. A change came over Melville Stoner. Of a sudden he seemed just a man of forty, a little embarrassed by the presence of the younger woman, a little hesitant. "I'm going to the hotel now and I must leave you here," he said. His feet made a shuffling sound on the sidewalk. "I intended to tell you why you

found me lying out there with my face buried in the grass," he said. A new quality had come into his voice. It was the voice of the boy who had called to Rosalind out of the body of the man as they walked and talked on the tracks. "Sometimes I can't stand my life here," he said almost fiercely and waved his long arms about. "I'm alone too much. I grow to hate myself. I have to run out of town."

The man did not look at Rosalind but at the ground. His big feet continued shuffling nervously about. "Once in the winter-time I thought I was going insane," he said. "I happened to remember an orchard, five miles from town, where I had walked one day in the late fall when the pears were ripe. A notion came into my head. It was bitter cold but I walked the five miles and went into the orchard. The ground was frozen and covered with snow but I brushed the snow away. I pushed my face into the grass. In the fall when I had walked there the ground was covered with ripe pears. A fragrance arose from them. They were covered with bees that crawled over them, drunk, filled with a kind of ecstasy. I had remembered the fragrance. That's why I went there and put my face into the frozen grass. The bees were in an ecstasy of life and I had missed life. I have always missed life. It always goes away from me. I always imagine people walking away. In the spring, this year, I walked on the railroad track out to the bridge over Willow Creek. Violets grew in the grass. At that time I hardly noticed them but to-day I remembered. The violets were like the people who walk away from me. A mad desire to run after them had taken possession of me. I felt like a bird flying through space. A conviction that something had escaped me and that I must pursue it had taken possession of me."

Melville Stoner stopped talking. His face also had grown white and his hands also trembled. Rosalind had an almost irresistible desire to put out her hand and touch his hand. She wanted to shout, crying—"I am here. I am not dead. I am alive." Instead she stood in silence, staring at him, as the widow who owned the high-flying hens had stared. Melville Stoner struggled to recover from the ecstasy into which he had been thrown by his own words. He bowed and smiled. "I hope you are in the habit of walking on railroad tracks," he said. "I shall in the future know what to do with my time. When you come to town I shall

camp on the railroad tracks. No doubt, like the violets, you have left your fragrance out there." Rosalind looked at him. He was laughing at her as he had laughed when he talked to the widow standing at his gate. She did not mind. When he had left her she went slowly through the streets. The phrase that had come into her mind as they walked on the tracks came back and she said it over and over. "And God spoke to me out of a burning bush." She kept repeating the phrase until she got back into the Wescott house.

Rosalind sat on the front porch of the house where her girlhood had been spent. Her father had not come home for the evening meal. He was a dealer in coal and lumber and owned a number of unpainted sheds, facing a railroad siding west of town. There was a tiny office with a stove and a desk in a corner by a window. The desk was piled high with unanswered letters and with circulars from mining and lumber companies. Over them had settled a thick layer of coal dust. All day he sat in his office looking like an animal in a cage, but unlike a caged animal he was apparently not discontented and did not grow restless. He was the one coal and lumber dealer in Willow Springs. When people wanted one of these commodities they had to come to him. There was no other place to go. He was content. In the morning as soon as he got to his office he read the Des Moines paper and then, if no one came to disturb him, he sat all day, by the stove in winter and by an open window through the long hot summer days, apparently unaffected by the marching change of seasons pictured in the fields, without thought, without hope, without regret that life was becoming an old worn-out thing for him.

In the Wescott house Rosalind's mother had already begun the canning of which she had several times spoken. She was making gooseberry jam. Rosalind could hear the pots boiling in the kitchen. Her mother walked heavily. With the coming of age she was beginning to grow fat.

The daughter was weary from much thinking. It had been a day of many emotions. She took off her hat and laid it on the porch beside her. Melville Stoner's house next door had windows that were like eyes staring at her, accusing her. "Well now, you see, you have gone too fast," the house declared. It sneered at

her. "You thought you knew about people. After all you knew nothing." Rosalind held her head in her hands. It was true she had misunderstood. The man who lived in the house was no doubt like other people in Willow Springs. He was not, as she had smartly supposed, a dull citizen of a dreary town, one who knew nothing of life. Had he not said words that had startled her out of herself?

Rosalind had an experience not uncommon to tired, nervous people. Her mind, weary of thinking, did not stop thinking, but went on faster than ever. A new plane of thought was reached. Her mind was like a flying machine that leaves the ground and leaps into the air.

It took hold upon an idea expressed or implied in something Melville Stoner had said. "In every human being there are two voices, each striving to make itself heard."

A vast new field of thinking had opened itself before her. After all, human beings might be understood. It might be possible to understand her mother and her mother's life, her father, the man she loved, herself. There was the voice that said words. Words came forth from lips. They conformed, fell into a certain mould. For the most part the words had no life of their own. They had come down out of old times and many of them were no doubt once strong living words, coming out of the depth of people, out of the bellies of people. The words had escaped out of a shut-in place. They had once expressed living truth. Then they had gone on being said, over and over, by the lips of many people, endlessly, wearily.

She thought of men and women she had seen together, that she had heard talking together as they sat in street cars or in apartments or walked in a Chicago park. Her brother, the travelling salesman, and his wife had talked half wearily through the long evenings she had spent with them in their apartment. It was with them as with the other people. A thing happened. The lips said certain words but the eyes of the people said other words. Sometimes the lips expressed affection while hatred shone out of the eyes. Sometimes it was the other way about. What a confusion!

It was clear there was something hidden away within people that could not get itself expressed—except accidentally. One was startled or alarmed and then the words that fell from the lips became pregnant words, words that lived.

The vision that had sometimes visited her in her girlhood as she lay in bed at night came back. Again she saw the people on the marble stairway, going down and away, into infinity. Her own mind began to make words that struggled to get themselves expressed through her lips. She hungered for someone to whom to say the words and half arose to go to her mother, to where her mother was making gooseberry jam in the kitchen, and then sat down again. "They were going down into the hall of the hidden voices," she whispered to herself. The words excited and intoxicated her as had the words from the lips of Melville Stoner. She thought of herself as having quite suddenly grown amazingly, spiritually, even physically. She felt relaxed, young, wonderfully strong. She imagined herself as walking, as had the young girl she had seen in the vision, with swinging arms and shoulders, going down a marble stairway—down into the hidden places in people, into the hall of the little voices. "I shall understand, after this—what shall I not understand?" she asked herself.

Doubt came and she trembled a little. As she walked with him on the railroad track Melville Stoner had gone down within herself. Her body was a house, in at the door of which he had walked. He had known about the night noises in her father's house—her father at the well by the kitchen door, the slap of the spilled water on the floor. Even when she was a young girl and had thought herself alone in the bed in the darkness in the room upstairs in the house before which she now sat she had not been alone. The strange bird-like man who lived in the house next door had been with her, in her room, in her bed. Years later he had remembered the terrible little noises of the house and had known how they had terrified her. There was something terrible in his knowledge, too. He had spoken, given forth his knowledge, but as he did so there was laughter in his eyes, perhaps a sneer.

In the Wescott house the sounds of housekeeping went on. A man who had been at work in a distant field, who had already begun his fall ploughing, was unhitching his horses from the plough. He was far away, beyond the street's end, in a field that swelled a little out of the plain. Rosalind stared. The man was hitching the horses to a wagon. She saw him as through the large end of a telescope. He would drive the horses away to a distant farmhouse and put them into a barn. Then he would go into a

house where there was a woman at work. Perhaps the woman, like her mother, would be making gooseberry jam. He would grunt as her father did when at evening he came home from the little hot office by the railroad siding. "Hello," he would say, flatly, indifferently, stupidly. Life was like that.

Rosalind became weary of thinking. The man in the distant field had got into his wagon and was driving away. In a moment there would be nothing left of him but a thin cloud of dust that floated in the air. In the house the gooseberry jam had boiled long enough. Her mother was preparing to put it into glass jars. The operation produced a new little side current of sounds. She thought again of Melville Stoner. For years he had been sitting, listening to sounds. There was a kind of madness in it.

She had got herself into a half-frenzied condition. "I must stop it," she told herself. "I am like a stringed instrument on which the strings have been tightened too much." She put her face into her hands, wearily.

And then a thrill ran through her body. There was a reason for Melville Stoner's being what he had become. There was a locked gateway leading to the marble stairway that led down and away, into infinity, into the hall of the little voices and the key to the gateway was love. Warmth came back into Rosalind's body. "Understanding need not lead to weariness," she thought. Life might after all be a rich, a triumphant thing. She would make her visit to Willow Springs count for something significant in her life. For one thing she would really approach her mother, she would walk into her mother's life. "It will be my first trip down the marble stairway," she thought and tears came to her eyes. In a moment her father would be coming home for the evening meal, but after supper he would go away. The two women would be alone together. Together they would explore a little into the mystery of life, they would find sisterhood. The thing she had wanted to talk about with another understanding woman could be talked about then. There might yet be a beautiful outcome to her visit to Willow Springs and to her mother.

To be continued

SNAKE

BY D. H. LAWRENCE

A snake came to my water-trough
On a hot, hot day, and I in pyjamas for the heat,
To drink there.

In the deep, strange-scented shade of the great dark carob tree
I came down the steps with my pitcher
And must wait, must stand and wait, for there he was at the trough
before me.

He reached down from a fissure in the earth-wall in the gloom
And trailed his yellow-brown slackness soft-bellied down, over the
edge of the stone trough
And rested his throat upon the stone bottom,
And where the water had dripped from the tap, in a small clearness,
He sipped with his straight mouth,
Softly drank through his straight gums, into his slack long body,
Silently.

Someone was before me at my water-trough,
And I, like a second-comer, waiting.

He lifted his head from his drinking, as cattle do,
And looked at me vaguely, as drinking cattle do,
And flickered his two-forked tongue from his lips, and mused a
moment,
And stooped and drank a little more,
Being earth-brown, earth-golden from the burning bowels of the
earth
On the day of Sicilian July, with Etna smoking.

The voice of my education said to me
He must be killed,
For in Sicily the black, black snakes are innocent, the gold are
venomous.

And voices in me said, If you were a man
You would take a stick and break him now, and finish him off.

But must I confess how I liked him,
How glad I was he had come like a guest in quiet, to drink at my
water-trough
And depart peaceful, pacified, and thankless,
Into the burning bowels of this earth?

Was it cowardice, that I dared not kill him?
Was it perversity, that I longed to talk to him?
Was it humility, to feel honoured?
I felt so honoured.

And yet those voices:
If you were not afraid you would kill him.

And truly I was afraid, I was most afraid,
But even so, honoured still more
That he should seek my hospitality
From out the dark door of the secret earth.

He drank enough
And lifted his head, dreamily, as one who has drunken,
And flickered his tongue like a forked light on the air, so black,
Seeming to lick his lips,
And looked around like a god, unseeing into the air,
And slowly turned his head,
And slowly, very slowly, as if thrice adream,
Proceeded to draw his slow length curving round
And climb again the broken bank of my wall-face.

And as he put his head into that dreadful hole,
And as he slowly drew up, snake-easing his shoulders, and entered
further,
A sort of horror, a sort of protest against his withdrawing into that
horrid black hole,
Deliberately going into the blackness, and slowly drawing himself
after,

Overcame me now his back was turned.

I looked round, I put down my pitcher,
I picked up a clumsy log
And threw it at the water-trough with a clatter.

I think it did not hit him,
But suddenly that part of him that was left behind convulsed in
undignified haste,
Writhed like lightning, and was gone
Into the black hole, the earth-lipped fissure in the wall-front,
At which, in the intense still noon, I stared with fascination.

And immediately I regretted it.
I thought how paltry, how vulgar, what a mean act!
I despised myself and the voices of my accursed human education.

And I thought of the albatross,
And I wished he would come back, my snake.

For he seemed to me again like a king,
Like a king in exile, uncrowned in the underworld,
Now due to be crowned again.

And so, I missed my chance with one of the lords
Of life.
And I have something to expiate:
A pettiness.

PARIS VERSUS THE WORLD

BY WYNDHAM LEWIS

THE exhibitions of pictures by French resident artists that have been held in London lately have given rise to comparisons between the "form" of the eccentric visitors and the "form" of the native innovator. Painters and boxers have been a little confused. But this was all to the advantage of the painter. Two sorts of folk have turned these exhibitions to account. First, those with interest in London commercial painting said: "Ah, *that* now we understand, when a Frenchman does that sort of thing! And of course he does it better for it is more *natural* to a Frenchman to do that sort of thing." It could be regarded as a natural proclivity of the gay city. Or to produce a "revolutionary movement" in art every thirty years or so would be proper to the French, with their Carmagnolesque traditions. The luxurious and sheltered market of British commercial painting would not be retruded or ruffled by that. The Island Bastille of Burlington House would still ingurgitate the vast, remote, and artless bourgeoisie of England as much as ever. Not a breath of effective hostility would disturb the peace of Piccadilly.

Yet, in spite of this remoteness and invulnerability those with interests in this very fat, obscure, out-of-the-way commerce are not devoid of elementary malice. It is the habit of the two worlds of art—the world of art represented by the Maid of the Mountains, Garvice, Brangwyn, Rackham, Sir William Richmond, and that ornamented by Ezra Pound, Roger Fry, renderers of the Russian of Chekhov—to ignore each other. Nevertheless, in addition to his fabulous wealth, the large commercial art-practitioner would not be averse to a bit of glory. The constant abuse that is poured over him throughout the entire daily, weekly, monthly press, although not affecting his pocket very much, at certain moments irritates him. The goat in him suddenly pokes its head out and grins when a foreign, and therefore so much more agreeable nuisance puts in an appearance, and he sees a chance of the home-plague getting a little dirt, too! "If you *must* have this kind of thing, at least let it be *French*!" is more or less his refrain.

The other kind of rather downtrodden man who also sees his opportunity is one who is technically an inhabitant of the austerer world. He feels perhaps that some alliance with the foreigner will enhance his rather weak position. He, in fact, calls in the big heavy-weight from across the channel (to employ an athletic jargon that he is prone to affect) to give the local bullies a smack in the eye. This compels him to a painful admission that he or his friends are only, *for the moment*, fly-weights; or, at the most, in a dubious welter class; but, as he works it out, it will leave them at the end of the transaction in the position of rather shy and retiring white hopes!

Interest in these matters is, on the part of the Magnates of the Brush, solely a commercial one, complicated with wounded vanity. On the part of the locally discomforted outsider it is a personal and particularly feminine one. Those interested in the reality are so few in number, disinclined to retributive speech, contemptuous of the arts of the busy amateur, that a garbled or over-emotional or highly non-specialized impression of the points raised remains galbed on the mind of the public; there the thing is left.

The result, then, of these recent French shows has been not to stimulate an interest in experimental painting in general—although this would have been the result had the painters represented been approached with any understanding—but to serve as an arm against English painters who had in the first place dared to display tendencies to experiment in the home and ultimate fastness of every conservatism: and, in the second, to experiment with more ardour and success than the more sheltered favourites of Fortune, who were pushed thereto rather through the sporting and naughty proclivities of the dilettante mind than from the passions of the intelligence. And this side of our small cultivated world has joined naturally, with a charming clapping of ecstatic and childlike hands, in the riot of philandering and stylistic tasting that has marked the triumph in Paris of Picasso.

In these uncritical outer lands the heroic "French painting versus the world!" indulged in by several of our contemporaries would pass as a not very interesting but probably true statement of the position in the minute extremist section of the universe about which it is uttered. Just as their hats and their houris are better than ours, so their advanced art (like some new and expensive drink, by no means to everyone's taste) is sure to be better. For is not

painting, anyway you look at it, of that luxurious and narrow nature? An author now, a man of science, is a different matter.

In setting out to give a more exact idea of the real situation, a first difficulty is the attitude of many English painters affected by these chicaneries. They are inclined, strongly taking sides, to ruffle angrily towards the aspersers of their national kitchen: even though they are only the ill-paid minor experts who concoct the one shame-facedly-included, sensational dish.

For the first false note that should be indicated in the "French painting against the world" stuff, is that there is nothing in the culture of Europe to-day to justify any reaction against the established fact; the fact of European art, of one culture throughout the entire Western world. Just as it is only the less developed individuals who remain conspicuously national products, so it is only very inferior artists who remain picturesquely, hairily, Norse, tearfully Russian, brutally German, or prettily French. That a man in the emotional movements by which he evolves may wind quickly or slowly, testily or gaily, for some genealogical reason, is understood. But there are quick Swiss and slow Frenchmen, nigger-like Englishmen. And niggers like Mr Mallaby Deely.

The most famous French painters to-day, those whose work was the chief attraction of the French shows, are principally Spaniards, Belgians, Greeks, Germans, or Jews. French *race* or birth is the last thing, it would appear, to qualify an artist for inclusion in an elect community of impeccable geniuses. When, a century from this time, the history of painting in Paris comes to be written, instead of the Cézanne, Manet, Dégas, Renoir band of the last century, all born Frenchmen, it will be very much of a *Légion Etrangère* that will have to be marshalled by the art-historian. There are hardly any Frenchmen in it. All the directors, or the seeming directors, of the great aesthetic movements there at present, are *not* Frenchmen, except André Derain.

So we should have to substitute for "French painting" (remembering that in the days of Impressionism we could have used this term in full exactitude) "French-domiciled painting." And we must also remember that this domicile does not make a Frenchman as American domicile turns out an American.

We have, first, then, the supremacy of France during the last century amongst the forward groups of European painting; in

alliance with other branches of the French Intelligence, the evolution of the Impressionist movement. The next important phase is the present; all the leaders are non-French, but they mostly live in Paris. Is it not probable that the next phase will see this centralized talent dispersed? Europe grows more, not less, of one mind: means of communication develop rapidly, the separating politics have had their day in most countries. The heroic emotional moujik type, as an example, appears extinct where Russian intelligence to-day is seen to push farthest. We do not want a pretentious or a sentimental or a fierce commercial nationalism in art, any more than we wish a hegemony of taste with the Jew as the party responsible for it.

The reason that talent will tend to flow outward will be partly economic (just as the reason of centralization is that) and partly it would be a simple question of the accident of birth. A man born in Moscow, without considering that Moscow is the centre of the universe, or that his own family and friends are the nicest in the world, may still think it preferable to continue there, because it is simpler. Or if he moved, he would not always wish to move to Paris. He might prefer Copenhagen or Constantinople. If his mind were venturesome there would probably be only one country where he would find it inconvenient, for some time yet, to dwell. That is, alas, England.

So in this "France versus the world" matter, the only thing really to consider is whether a European artist to-day had better pitch his tent in Paris, or whether he might equally well elect to live in Bohemia, Lancashire, or Andalusia. He can, in almost any part of Europe, acquaint himself from day to day with the phases of thought and developments of fashion occurring in other parts of Europe, if he wish. The question of initial training (art school, et cetera) is insignificant.

The real question lies in the individual's character on the one hand, his purse on the other. And purse really is included in character. Gauguin and Van Gogh lived, each of them, for much of their lives, at least as far from Paris as we are. They were both miserably poor. Neither of them developed into Salon painters or painters of popular portraits.

Let us for Heaven's sake exaggerate, rather than disguise, the iniquities of this community. Its great virtues are big enough

(often ugly enough) to look after themselves! A very delicate and distinguished kind of impresario who had derived a certain renown from exposing in aristocratic saloons and elsewhere the merits of "the Moderns," the posts-this, that, and the other, as he styled them, once opened his mind to me on this subject. He said he had never known a single case of an English born man or woman among those wealthy enough to make a difference, who had been of any use or help to him in his new adventures. Scotch and Irish, I understood, had the pleasurable privilege of falling without that bitter qualification.

When a man who starts life with the instincts and ambitions of a great painter, after ten years of bafflement and decline, at last agrees that in such a world there is nothing for it but to confine oneself to money-making—enters the Royal Academy or accepts a lucrative post in the City—the gleeful American will say to you: "Ah! you see how powerful this 'conservatism' is: it breaks even a man like *that*!" You at once reflect that the American is oversensational in this lurid vision of a kind of machine of selfish dulness, contrived to reduce the brightest and best to spiritual death. The true hero would not succumb so quickly: there must have been the seeds of this dissolution from the start, and so forth.

All the same, let us admit forthwith that there *is* something in this community (that Stendhal saw when he came here, that every stranger who comes here must see) that is subtly contaminating to the artist; that conspires against the ambitions of the Intellect, and that an artist must spend half his time in combating.

And those people who irritate you most with their fashionable and empty adulation of "Paris" (for whom it is really analagous to a woman's gratitude about her hats and frocks) are the last people who are likely to bring about, or desire, a change. Whether on some iconodulistic process of the martyred image, and the benefits of such a ban; or just because art smashes enough anyhow of the peculiar oppression which it attracts, to contrive a narrow shaft of sunlight for its growth, England has produced its quantities of artists of all kinds. And as, if anything, its power to blight diminishes, and it grows daily very slightly more human (almost perceptibly so to the naked eye) is it not reasonable to assume that at any moment that a good artist arises, he could work out his destiny here as easily, at least, as his glorious predecessors? And if he is not a good artist, it matters very little where he goes.

On the other hand, if he be the genuine article, and *can* go to Paris, Rome, or Vienna, would he do better to seek the more alert and sympathetic atmosphere of those towns, as, more or less, Whistler did? It is a matter of taste, and also an economic question. There are undoubtedly a hundred times as many people interested in painting independent of Commerce and Academies in Paris as there are here. But, finances apart, the Paris (Roman or Viennese) domicile has not much to do with the quality of the work. I think it is monstrously difficult for any one who starts without any money backing here to be an artist.

There is evidently the whole reason why there is a greater quantity in Paris than here of painters (chiefly not French) who do something interesting in painting. Foreigners of the same race and same talent work here: if they do not do as good work it is a question of money and nothing else. But would these souls, too readily influenced by the jingle of the cash-box, be worth lying awake at nights about if they had decided on Paris instead of London? Are you sure, you should say to the Paris enthusiast, that among your Paris artists you have not got mostly individuals of that category? Surely this transposable, characterless, brilliant tribe, such a feature of our times, is valueless in any final critical estimate?

PORTRAIT

BY CHARLES DE GUIRE CHRISTOPH

The piano sounds ching-ching.
It makes you think of minuet
steps with the toe pointed.
When that lady cut out the heart-shaped
patches for the cheeks and
thinly, clearly pressed her eyebrows
with the sharp pencil—
her curved body pointed out in
many bright places
toward trembling, jewelled words,
and her heart, don't you think,
went ching-ching?

THE SAD SEQUEL TO PUSS-IN-BOOTS

BY PADRAIC COLUM

HE waited for me, this strange cat, and when I opened the door he entered the garret with me. I lighted my candle. Meantime he had seated himself on a stool at my table. I saw that he was a long cat and that he had quite a broad back; not a highly-bred animal, I should have said, but a plebeian of great character.

He had a wrinkled brow and eyes that were quite extraordinary. I declare that they were like pieces of jade become alive. They were mournful eyes. The imperative of misery was upon the creature and he communicated it to me.

There was nothing for it, I realized, but to share my supper with him. I put my milk and bread into two bowls, and left one at my visitor's side of the table. He gave me a look of acknowledgement. When he ate, it was like one who had a fast to break.

Towards the end he ate slowly, as one crumbles bread at a table preparatory to the opening of a conversation. Then he said:

"I have called upon you, not merely because you have a good heart, but because you are a man of letters. You can make the history of my misfortunes known to the world. I had intended to call upon Monsieur Voltaire, but I am informed he still stays with the King of Prussia. My case will not wait. I am not now as robust as I once was, and I cannot delay making my testament.

"Without further preface or preamble I shall declare who I am. I am no other than the Cat of the Marquis of Carabas."

"The Cat of the Marquis of Carabas!" I cried, "then you must know the Marquise."

At that the cat jumped off the stool, and went pacing up and down my garret. "The Marquise," he said in a most sinister tone, "oh, yes, I know the Marquise."

"I was privileged to see the Marquise at the opera the other night," I cried, giving expression—I will acknowledge it—to one of my life's enthusiasms. "What magnificence of beauty! And how wonderfully her jewels set off her beauty! Her jewels were

the talk of the assembly. The Envoy from the Sophy of Persia said that the star upon her forehead was unique—his master has no such jewel in his collection. But then it is said that her husband has a great estate."

"Surely you have heard the history of the Marquis of Carabas," said the cat, seating himself upon the stool again.

"Surely," said I.

"You speak," said he impatiently, "as if people did not read Perrault any more."

"The Marquis of Carabas," I said. "A younger son, was he not? Quite penniless. He had a cat . . ." Then I looked at my visitor with greater attention. "Dear me," I said, "is it possible that you are the Cat of the Marquis of Carabas—the celebrated Puss-in-Boots?"

"I am that unhappy character," he cried, "the more unhappy in the fact that my name and my exploits do not spring to your mind at once. But can people really be so unmindful of one of the most sensational happenings in Society in our time? A happening, moreover, that has been recorded by one of the great writers of the day."

"You allude to Monsieur Perrault," I said, not without a trace—I am free now to confess it—of mortification. "You allude to Monsieur Perrault. But it has been stated on quite good authority that Monsieur Perrault did not really write the histories that bear his name. His son, a boy of six years, really composed them."

"What does it matter?" cried the cat with a greater show of impatience. "What do these questions matter? You all know the gossip about a book, but how few people nowadays know the contents of a book! I had expected more from you."

"The whole history comes back to me," I said hastily. "Pray forgive my remissness. You aided the penniless young man. You caught partridge in your bag and you brought them to the King. 'Presents from the Marquis of Carabas,' you said, thereby winning the interest of the King who was very fond of partridge. You went with the King and his daughter in their carriage one day, and when you came to the river you cried out, 'My lord, the Marquis of Carabas, is drowning.' When the young man, whom you had instructed to bathe in the river, was drawn out by the

King's lackeys, you pretended that his clothing had been stolen. The King ordered some of his company to lend him clothes. Dressed up in this finery he was presented to the King. With his handsome person, and in the fashionable clothes that he now wore, he made such an impression upon her that the King's daughter fell in love with him.

"As the carriage drove into the country, the King would ask, whenever he saw a splendid castle or a particularly fine estate, 'whom does this belong to?' And you always replied, 'to my lord, the Marquis of Carabas.'

"As a matter of fact, all these splendid castles and admirable estates belonged to an Ogre. As the carriage came near the most imposing of the castles, you sprang out and went swiftly towards it. As you guessed the Ogre was at home. You engaged him in a conversation. Ogres, like the rest of us, are not averse to talking of themselves and their activities. You asked him if it were true that he could change himself into something colossal. He changed himself into an elephant, if I remember aright. Then you asked him if he could change himself into something tiny—a mouse, you suggested. He changed himself into a mouse. You sprang upon him and devoured the transformed Ogre. When the carriage came you were ready to welcome the King and his daughter into the castle of the Marquis of Carabas. The estates had already been appraised by the King. The betrothal of the Princess and the young Marquis of Carabas followed without delay. They lived happily afterwards. She is certainly the most beautiful and the most amiable woman in Europe."

The head of my visitor remained bowed, and I felt he was thinking furiously. "He was inconsiderate, of course," he said, "like all young men, but I refuse to believe that he was bad at heart—at least, not until his character was broken down by the sort of life she compelled him to lead. I cannot say as much for her. She was brought up at a court, after all, and you know what that means.

"I was disrespectful to her, she said. All that she meant was that I did not leave a room when she entered. She complained that I was impertinent enough to pass her on the stairway. But is it not excusable to make some little demonstration of one's worth after one had been railed at before servants? The truth

of the matter is that the Marquise never liked me. From the moment her husband introduced me to her as his benefactor she became ill-disposed towards me. Why that should have been I do not know. But I saw hatred in her smile when she said, 'This, I suppose, is the Mayor of the Palace.'

"I had not asked the Marquis to make any definite arrangements in regard to my entertainment in the Castle. But he knew perfectly well that I had been looking forward to certain satisfactions. It is true that I was not used to pheasant for breakfast. But just because I was not used to pheasant I wanted it. And, anyway, pheasants abounded on the Marquis of Carabas' estates.

"I think it was in the third week I was informed by the Major Domo that I could have pheasant only twice a week. When I complained about this I was told that the spectacle of my eating pheasant had a demoralizing effect on the household. After this, the higher servants refused to wait upon me. I went to the Marquis, and he remonstrated with them, but in no very strong terms. He gave them the liberty to say in their impertinence that they had not been engaged to wait on cats.

"After this one of the scullions waited upon me. Then I had to give up going into the court-yard where I used to sun myself. The Marquise had had a dovecot placed there, and it was alleged that my presence alarmed the doves.

"You spoke of her jewellery. I have reason, I may tell you, to resent her passion for precious stones. Would you believe that the Marquise listened to an impostor who assured her that my eyes were not fleshly, but were absolutely solid, and were gems of the first water? After that she permitted herself the criminal desire of wanting to possess one of my eyes."

I stared into my visitor's eyes and I noted that they were strangely green and unchanging.

"The Marquis actually came to me to ask me to give one of my eyes to his wife," he resumed. "He said that as I was a pensioner of the household I did not need so many organs as those who were engaged in earning a living needed. I was provided for, he said. Also he would have me believe that my eyesight was so powerful that a single eye such as I possessed was enough for any creature. I was exceedingly indignant. Then the Marquis entreated me. In the name of our long and unbroken friendship he asked me to

give him one of my eyes for his wife. I refused to listen to this plea. Finally he demanded my eye in the name of his wife, a princess of the blood.

"I was made so furious that I sprang at him. My claws did him no damage, however. And yet, that evening, no supper was served me.

"Naturally I was resolved to have it out with the Marquis, and to have matters settled between us, once and for all. I awaited his return from the hunt next day. As the party came through the gates one of the huntsmen espied me and pointed me out to him. I had no intention of making an attack, although such was imputed to me. Can you believe it? The hounds were hallooed on to me, and I barely escaped by running swiftly up a tree.

"That night the doors of the Castle and of the lodges were closed against me, and unruly hounds were set loose. This may have been the doing of the servants who always disliked me. I went with no protest to the Castle. I crossed one of the walls and betook myself to Paris. I should, of course, have been delighted to have had the opportunity of meeting and conversing with Monsieur Voltaire, but I am sure, Monsieur, that you will do me the same sort of justice that he would have done me."

My visitor stayed the night and departed after breakfast. I fully intended to publish the history that was related to me. But I saw the Marquise of Carabas at the opera the night after, and I could not bring myself to publish something that would reflect unfavourably on so adorable a creature. What beauty, what amiability, what a radiant charm!

And so I am leaving this with the papers that are to be published posthumously.

TWO POEMS

BY MARIANNE MOORE

WHEN I BUY PICTURES

or what is closer to the truth,
when I look at that of which I may regard myself as the imaginary
possessor,

I fix upon what would give me pleasure in my average moments:
the satire upon curiosity, in which no more is discernible than the
intensity of the mood;

or quite the opposite—the old thing, the mediaeval decorated
hat-box,

in which there are hounds with waists diminishing like the waist
of the hour-glass

and deer and birds and seated people;

it may be no more than a square of parquetry; the literal biography
perhaps—

in letters standing well apart upon a parchment-like expanse;
an artichoke in six varieties of blue; the snipe-legged hieroglyphic
in three parts;

the silver fence protecting Adam's grave or Michael taking Adam
by the wrist.

Too stern an intellectual emphasis upon this quality or that, de-
tracts from one's enjoyment;

it must not wish to disarm anything; nor may the approved triumph
easily be honoured—

that which is great because something else is small.

It comes to this: of whatever sort it is,

it must acknowledge the forces which have made it;

it must be "lit with piercing glances into the life of things;"

then I "take it in hand as a savage would take a looking-glass."

TWO POEMS

A GRAVEYARD

Man, looking into the sea—
taking the view from those who have as much right to it as you
have to it yourself—
it is human nature to stand in the middle of a thing
but you cannot stand in the middle of this:
the sea has nothing to give but a well excavated grave.
The firs stand in a procession—each with an emerald turkey-foot
at the top—
reserved as their contours, saying nothing;
repression, however, is not the most obvious characteristic of the
sea;
the sea is a collector, quick to return a rapacious look.
There are others besides you who have worn that look—
whose expression is no longer a protest; the fish no longer investi-
gate them
for their bones have not lasted:
men lower nets, unconscious of the fact that they are desecrating
a grave,
and row quickly away—the blades of the oars
moving together like the feet of water-spiders as if there were no
such thing as death.
The wrinkles progress upon themselves in a phalanx—beautiful
under networks of foam,
and fade breathlessly while the sea rustles in and out of the sea-
weed;
the birds swim through the air at top speed, emitting cat-calls as
heretofore—
the tortoise-shell scourges about the feet of the cliffs, in motion
beneath them
and the ocean, under the pulsation of light-houses and noise of
bell-buoys,
advances as usual, looking as if it were not that ocean in which
dropped things are bound to sink—
in which if they turn and twist, it is neither with volition nor con-
sciousness.

WRECK

BY JEAN GIRAUDOUX

NIGHT. I had apparently slept all day. My body was dry and warm under my hands. I thought of plunging my arms down between the planks of the raft; the beach was under it.

There was no moon, my fingers had met a root in the sand and by this I gripped the island. Why "island," and how known to be such by this initiation of contact? With the attrition of hours I came to associate each of the watches with an unwonted sonority, yet anticipated for each an ultimate translatability. Towards midnight a horn and three purring chuckles; the first cock, and, later, occultations shaming the other birds into silence, they doubtless being relatives of our wood pigeons and nightingales. Then sleeping unawares and half waking: a groaning of the island, the sea giving a melody. Then, for dew in this archipelago, a dry and burning intake of breath: the dew of another fashion. Then the same tortured waiting . . . then in place of my governess' interruption, a sharp stroke on my forehead . . . this last from an over-beaked bird which fled after inflicting the injury. . . . This blood trickling on my forehead perhaps awakened the island. First a faint moon cast its slow whitish wash over the heavens, then suddenly the sun, like satin, or more silky and glazed, set a new glitter upon it, and turning I saw the island.

Mine, emerging from haze. Miniature rainbows traversing the air, lateral, poised, vibrant in non-motion, between the slit waters and damp uncoloured land surface. Palm-clumps, rust-coloured fern, breaking the light obscurity of the mist; the sudden racket of cascades, as of water-jets turned on suddenly. The trees, giving up, each one, the rose and gilded bird it had sheltered, and at thirty feet distance, united—in order and in timely season to dissipate initial uneasiness between me and Providence—as if within hand-grasp, as breakfast by sleeper's bedside, in quantity sufficient to appease, in perpetuum, thirst, hunger: bananas in manifold fruit, a myriad yellow handles, to break with

infinite gentleness, as a surgeon breaking a rib, with the same little thrill at the snap—and cocoanuts, set to fall from more than oaky altitude upon (a) moss, or (b) opal stalagmites, in the second case opening automatically. The first mango ripened to perfection. Predestination of ages timed the meeting, mango to mouth, mouth to mango ineluctably. A fair sun loitering behind palms and underbrush like a kitchen mechanic; or rather the rays split and crossed like a chink's chop-sticks clattered and poked in the substance dislodging pineapples or strawberries, succulent or enormous. Uncatalogued foliage, traceable possibly by analogies, bread, milk, meat, trees fruitless, almost, in some cases, leafless, yet presaging abundance in one sort here, here in another, succulence, substance, inversely, or presumed, to the abundance of visible fructifications honey, edible fungi, or birds' eggs within walking reach of the unwonted first human intruder. Turtles in shadow and yet as near to the sun rays which covered their eggs, as male bird to his nest-mate, between spicy shrubs; grasses turning to vegetables; flowers which an hidden instinct prompted me to taste; so finding them succulent; leaves which I guessed to be full of perfume; great calices from which I could drink rainwater through a straw, until at the end of my first insular morning my hands were covered with its scents, as a new bar-maid's with news of her tap-room.

And in order, again, to settle misunderstandings of all sorts between the Providence of perfumes and myself, the wind sprayed me with odours, a complete category of the island. Familiar: rose d'orsay; ancient amber, honey-dew, fresh suddenly as if one had just opened their bottles, and certainly stranger tonalities, now for the first time perceived as they clung about me, certainly not sterile as in Europe, but adhering with a natural purpose, leading to chosen ends. Modesty driving me from clump to clump, as if in need of escape; thus went the length of the island, and came unexpectedly to the headland which had in lost time linked it to some dissolute continent, and stopped suddenly, hopeless, thus ten thousand years late, of transition.

Life flowing up with the sun, the clear light casting courteous spears upon all flowers and cascades, and upon humming birds carrying each the perfume of the last conquered flower, and with the last flower's colour staining their beaks. Gilded ivies ran like

waterpipes from the tree-masses, as if to provide a circulatory-system for the full charms of Oceanica, from one subscribing tree to another. The luxury, and even the comfort of nature there to the full, a personal kindliness to small unvisited islands, imitating haphazard man's handiwork, a warm springlet in a stray rock, cold ditto in moss, a boiling jet squirting hourly from an iced waterfall; soap-fruit, scattered pumice, brush-leaves, thorn-pins, and in gold-quartz a formation like an organ and one like a Louis XVI mantel-piece; a cane of rock crystal, reflecting at times some scarlet bird, throwing thus scintillations like the host in elevation; and—ultimate insular comfort—plagiarism of Poiré and of Martine, at the end of every straight glade, paved with black coral and bordered with cocoanut trunks, circled with crab-rose: heaps of red and blue plumage. An island undoubtedly. Beating its boundaries, seeking a ford of the whole Pacific, I came, at the first sunset, to my starting point. Two miles by three, lying obliquely against the sun; I had crossed the seven streams, driven, in case of the largest, to its fountain-head, by reason of width and swiftness. I had climbed the ridge, and to settle once and for all the question of hope, saw two or three kilometres to southward a second isle somewhat larger, and midway between it and the horizon—so that the road need not seem immeasurable—a third, with large green lights, as if for the *arrêts facultatifs* of the Paris tramway.

Shameful confession, my first indolent week, compared with that of other shipwrecked adventurers, save the matinal peck on the forehead, hardly more annoying than a too firm idea, the island was griefless. The second day, in one of the three white coral niches I made my bed from the feathers which bestrewed the island, the third day I picked away the stiffer feathers and filled their place with stray down from the larger sea birds, down which they shed profusely at the least exertion on their part, the fourth day I separated the feathers making three divers couches of the yellow, the black, the red, the fifth I unmade the divans, in search of one of Nenetza's rings, this loss stripping the cave bare as a bathtub; the sixth day I removed certain green feathers as being off colour, and those of a certain madder tone which were prickly, after these six periods of creation I had made nothing but my bed. Milk had spouted from the milk-tree, one had but to stroke the

trunk with one's hand, and the thousandfold udder yielded, the thousandfold mane turned towards me in the wind whirl, and there flowed enough to fill a jar of preserves; already I knew that one could drink straight from the wine tree, but that the sap of the cider tree had to stand—already I knew what fruits should be dried and which one could eat upon plucking.

Each morning I swept my threshold with a broom of real marabou, and all things were checked and certified, the sun checked in my sun-glass giving fire with small effort, certified the stream full of fish which had but two hundred yards from salt flood to the fountain-rock; checked the three echoes, whereof the last twelvefold—suitable echo for woman alone; oysters, mussels, excellent, and of which the last bed was in most tender and succulent youngness, checked the grass which would serve me for parsley, that which should be my cress, I found myself once and for all lacking, in this so perfect an insularity, an occupation

. . . . and waited.

Worse, in this degree, if I come so soon for the reader upon the tortures of expectancy, I passed my hours at the sea's edge, my very feet in its water through some superstition which bade me beware losing contact; if I moved a yard backward I was hopeless—though I had no expectation of rescue save in six months—in a year. And by additions and subtractions calculating backwards and forwards, now a week gained or lost, figuring to a nicety how many months it must last, save for unlikely hazard, or when a ship would set out in search of us. Then knew, better than any shipwright, what a ship costs in effort and hours . . . how many weeks, from keel-beam to rib, how much time between first painting and second coat—dry weather permitting, then to the water-stripe and the plimsoll, time also, until the sailors should be gathered between decks, sailors whom I could visualize in the back room of a St Brieu cabaret, or in third-class compartment at Grenat station, or somewhere between Brest and Toulon, on the route by which crews are carried from one sea to another across the divide of Auvergne; time to stow away mutton, still feeding in Nivernais, near some farm house whereabout the hedges must still be clipped before market time. A solid six months of sun in Europe would have shortened my time by three or four days. At times I thought the boat was ready, was starting, or one got a steamship off the

ways; the water then reached my ankles. But I caught my breath, there was some defect of equipment, I had to see it turned back to harbour. The Salers bullock needful for rationing, appeared suddenly alive, calm in a by-lane of Salers; the third ring of the port anchor chain lay on a Creusot forge, idle, the workman had "flu," he was threatened with double pneumonia. All these numberless details, eternally necessary for completion from boilers to screw, the pickle-bottle for the chief's table; the doctor's assistant's double-decked watch-charm were (a) at the bottle factory (b) in the third drawer of an Angoulême watchmaker. Finally, my ship sailed, but of a sudden, appeared new, brand new and excessively; there needed the breakage of three galley glasses; two cross trees blown off. Prayers for tempest in Europe, that a sailor should lose a finger, that a passenger should have his ear clipt—in my haste I had conjured up a crew too spic and span, lifeless, phantom; I had to debark them, deliver them to accidents in the lift, to dog-bites and flea-bites. At times a whole season rose up against me; the ice for the ice-box was still fluid in its hill stream, the crew's wine was still grape. Or, mid-voyage, the polar bird which the watch should sight off Terra Nova; the Cuban seaweed predestined to clot the keel; the tortoise which should bob in the ship's wake off the Azores, was not there according to schedule, and all the threads of my destiny broke web beneath this inertia. So wrong it is for a woman to usurp the place of the deity, and so surely should she surrender to him the surveillance. At times I caught breath, at seeing in a Savoian elm the wild cat whose fur was needed to trim the overcoat of my saving steersman, or motionless in Dalicaria (I saw only three splotches of black bark against a background of snow) the tree which should give paper pulp for the first Petit Parisien which I was to read on board.

But, to come to my island . . .

You are in error: Not that it was not covered with fairest trees; furbished with stones, above other, as gold above other metals; with butterflies by whose presence or absence one judges the worth of collections—but that I have no nomenclature for its surprises; at Belloque they had neglected to teach me equatorial flora and fauna.

I identified cocoanuts, birds of paradise, horse-flies; I shall com-

mit more than one solecism in spreading out my narrow vocabulary of exotics, to convey the herbage and ramage: *palatuvier*, *mandragore*, *mancenillier*; all the botany I had learned from the opera; and for the finest bird-house in the world but: "crimson hen"; "scarlet jay," and for their manners and plumage, a few phrases, picked at the age of ten from a book of travels in Guinea, a few epithets already worked to death in presenting the *ptemerops* (my companions) the *gourah*, and the *Mucuna Benetti*.

My island banded like the ground signals of an aviation camp: first circle: coral and matrix; second: border of cocoanuts; third of greensward and flowers; centre: two hills in untampered forest; green zones blazing in daylight; the shell zone gleaming at night; the pools in the two craters taking the light precisely at mid-day; all the birds of the Pacific coming to drink there; the entire island ruffling at the least suspicion of wind. If I raised an arm too suddenly I seemed to shake a red or blue carpet; and stretching my arms for matinal yawn, I, as if, unsewed the whole fabric.

The west wind drove down-balls towards the water; they floated in the lagoon like wild swans until the current bore them together into pillows and carried them thus toward Khuro-Thiro. I tried to take my bearings from this aviary. The presence of some bird out of Jules Verne, out of a text-book, might have indicated my geographic position. A cassowary would have indicated a proximity to Australia; for it has reached Tasmania on foot; the *outarde* indicates South Africa, but the *outarde* was absent; prehistoric birds inhabit equatorial regions; and seeing some old horny-beak and bald head behind this or that bulky tree trunk, I was full of terror lest it be held up by some reptilian hairy torso, or with spiny prehensile members. Yet the island was also a park for species in fashion, a zoo, a style-shop for plumage: paradise, aigrette, and marabou, or rather of marabou and ostrich feathers sprouting on a small crow. Everywhere, apparently hanging like the tassels of curtain-cords from cocoanut-palms, paroquets, heads down, ignorant of human vocabularies, still mimicking the noise of a paroquet prototype; or climbing by tens, with the beak-grip, resting on the trunks like red and yellow bulges of resin.

The cockatoo, who slept nightly on the second island, went wild at the arrival of the *gourahs*, which came inversely from that to rest upon this. Back and forth, birds, whose photos are in the

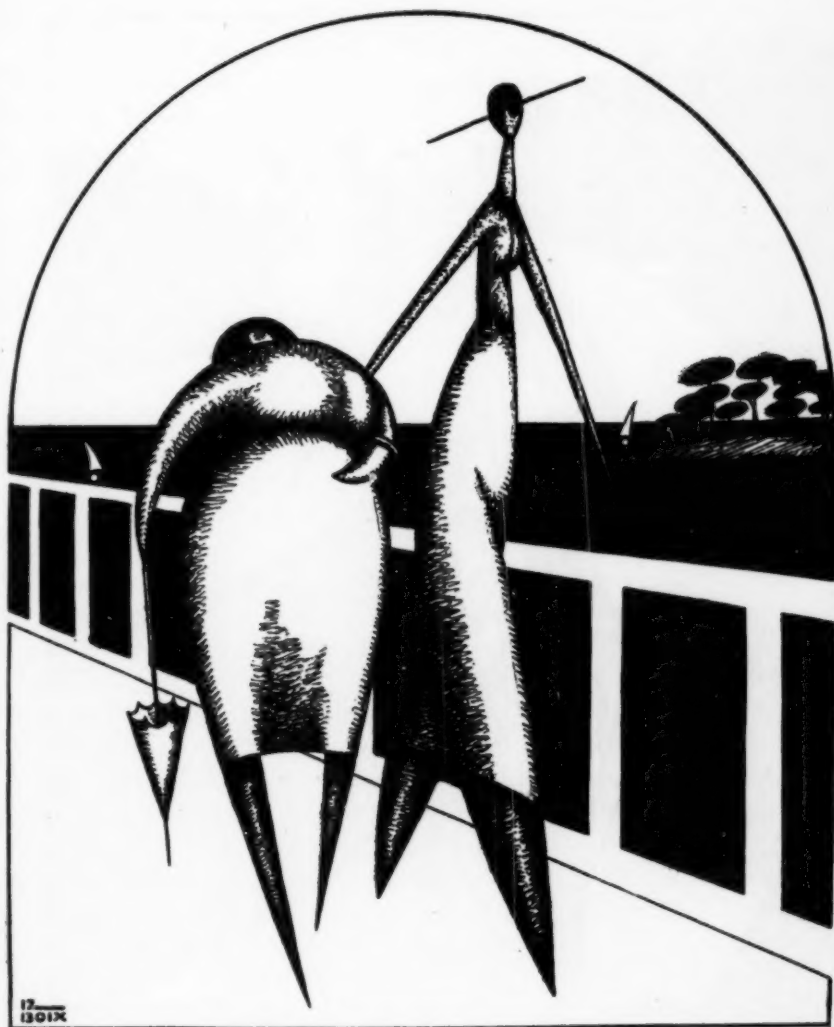
Journal des Voyages; the "mute" who always sits on the branch above the "singer" and gapes soundlessly in *contrapunto*; the "ugly" who is so *par excellence*, and instantly recognized, having apparently the seventy-two human maladies, corns, pimples, et cetera, including a tendency to sneeze, and to notice it before any one else, and having also a kind heart, the ugly man's compensation.

Golden sparrows, black, red sparrows which turned apparently into small mud-balls on alighting; grey-collared black birds which turned in like balls of purple and indigo; or on the strand found the parody of chicken yard; vermilion geese, ducks in tri-colour, yellow sea-mews, carmine peacocks, and at the slightest movement on my part, the colours moved as in a kaleidoscope; pheasant, roosters, hens preserved by a millionaire. At times a *Mucuna Benetti* jostled against me, or lighting upon my shoulder pecked a skin for a bark; I felt that some of them were ready to make me a permanent perch as elsewhere they make the crocodile and rhinoceros; standing on watch for their enemies; almost all of them permitting approach and caress, and thus far my adventure was dreamlike. Parliaments of the myriad weaver-birds, secretaries, sewing-birds, reed-planters, shell-planters, seemed at times to deliberate upon the norms of activity, or to consider the model nest. At times, toward sunset a flock of dwarf pigeons lighting upon a bat-hung mango would compel the nocturnal tenants to flutter perchless till morning: there was a perpetual pussy-wants-a-corner in every tree, which kept an hundred wings moving in its air space; this among trees so loaded that I should have thinned out the over-fruitage to comfort the branches. If I tried to frighten them by shouting, they turned at once towards me, gesticulating, and then showed me their backs with a clatter of cross lights in the branches. Certain birds fell suddenly like rocks into the lagoon, all my movements and habits obtained a monochrome and punctual accompaniment of some species or other; two blue paroquets for mastication of yellow bananas; two divers for ingurgitation of oysters; two orange-hued water-wagtails for nut gathering, both rising and perching in perfect synchronization one with other. For a month this aviary tempered my solitude, for I attributed to the birds somewhat the sympathy I myself had for their plumage.

But with time's attrition I perceived the gap between their period and my own. Vertebrates and mammiferae were absent; I had no postdiluvians for companionship; I wearied of seeing unoccupied caverns and fields, air spaces, where I had been wont from infancy to see my bondslaves, dogs, goats, horses. And at evening, nothing upon the branches but headless balls, or but one watching bird showing a rounded ear, in service of so many memberless bodies.

No oblique-eyed companions, none with egg-shaped ears; no trickery, no affection, no intelligence; one felt, and excessively, that the first cat, the first mongoose, was still in womb of creation; never, as in the country so often, the pregnant swellings of mother dog, of cow ready to calve, of doe; life in my island not transmitted by sleight, but by green, violet, and brown spotted eggs. No gravity, never the little animals that one attributes to a sentiment, as "the weazle for malice"; "the ermine for gentleness." The turtles disappeared a few days after my arrival; and at times, seeing the birds on the shore, or on the vines, lined as if on telegraph wires, that they, also, might abandon me, suddenly, and in concert, I felt myself at the mercy of the least breeze that might announce—even incorrectly—a tempest or the winter. I caged two, so that they at least might remain with me, for living companionship; I changed them daily.

Uselessly, for they stayed, stopping within fifty yards of the island, as if held by a non-extant wall; migratory birds in the centre of seasons, as the magnetic needle useless just at the pole. A giant gesture and all the island were moved, save me. I felt myself at the mercy of a sudden quarrel with witless birds whom I might unintentionally scare or offend, and who might leave for the other islands, leaving me powerless to explain or apologize, leaving also their eggs behind them. I was kind, bashful, accommodating, I flattered the Ugly bird, I complimented the Mute on his vocalism, for so it is when one lives with an unknown god imminent.



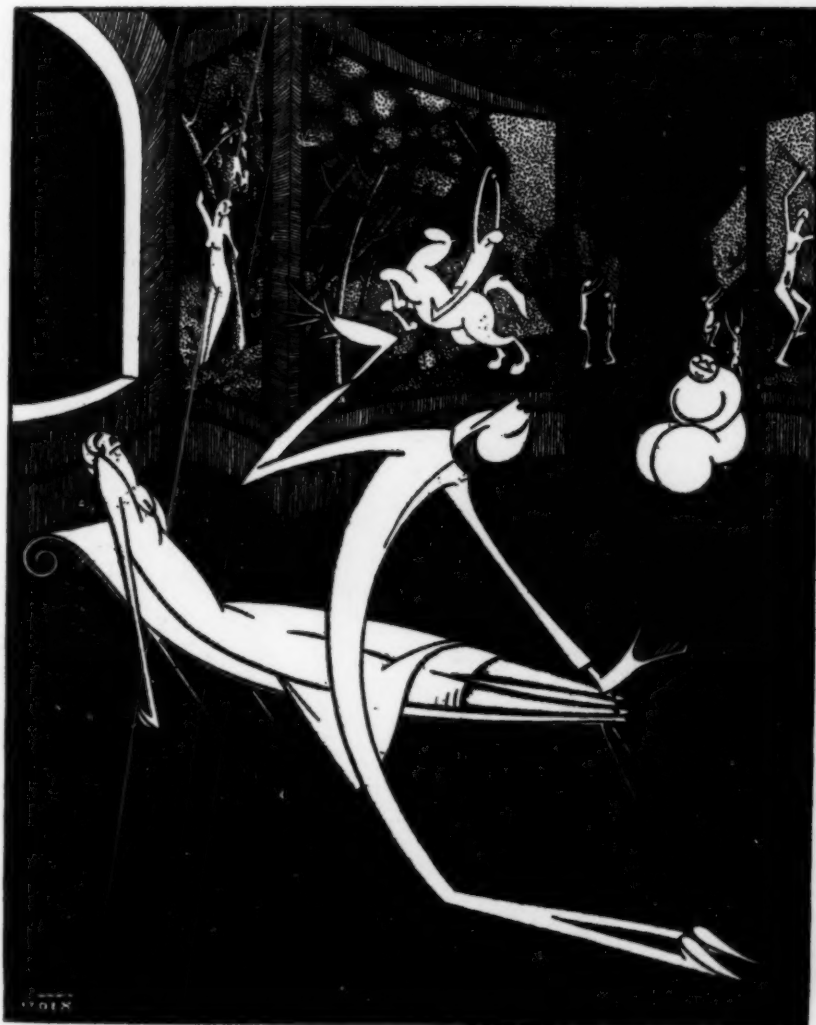
WALKING ARCHITECTURE. BY RICHARD BOIX





LAS MATEMATICAS NO SON SIEMPRE CIENCIAS EXACTAS: $3 + 3 = 2$
BY RICHARD BOIX





THE DUENNA. BY RICHARD BOIX





DOLCISSIMO. BY RICHARD BOIX



CARNIVAL

BY G. SANTAYANA

IN this world we must either institute conventional forms of expression or else pretend that we have nothing to express; the choice lies between a mask and a fig-leaf. Art and discipline render seemly what would be unseemly without them, but hypocrisy hides it ostentatiously under something irrelevant, and the fig-leaf is only a more ignominious mask. For the moment it is certainly easier to suppress the wild impulses of our nature than to manifest them fitly, at the right times and with the proper fugitive emphasis; yet in the long run suppression does not solve the problem, and meantime those maimed expressions which are allowed are infected with a secret misery and falseness. It is the charm and safety of virtue that it is more natural than vice, but many moralists do their best to deprive it of this advantage. They seem to think it would lose its value if they lost their office. Their precepts, as distinguished from the spontaneous appreciations of men, are framed in the interests of utility, and are curiously out of sympathy with the soul. Precept divides the moral world materially into right and wrong things; but nothing concrete is right or wrong intrinsically, and every object or event has both good and bad effects in the context of nature. Every passion, like life as a whole, has its feet in one moral climate and its head in another. Existence itself is not a good, but only an opportunity. Christians thank God for their creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life, but life is the condition and source of all evil, and the Indians thank Brahma or Buddha for lifting them out of it. What metaphysical psychologists call Will is the great original sin, the unaccountable and irrational interest which the spirit takes, when it is incarnate, in one thing happening rather than another; yet this mad interest is the condition of generosity and of every virtue. Love is a red devil at one end of its spectrum and an ultra-violet angel at the other end.

Nor is this amphibious moral quality limited to the passions; all facts and objects in nature can take on opposite moral tints. When abstracted from our own presence and interests, everything that can

be found or imagined is reduced to a mere essence, an ideal theme picked out of the infinite, something harmless, marvellous, and pure, like a musical rhythm or geometrical design. The whole world then becomes a labyrinth of forms and motions, a castle in the clouds built without labour and dissolved without tears. The moment the animal will reawakes, however, these same things acquire a new dimension; they become substantial, not to be created without effort nor rent without resistance; at the same time they become objects of desire and fear; we are so engrossed in existence that every phenomenon becomes questionable and ominous, and not so much a free gift and manifestation of its own nature as a piece of good or bad news. We are no longer surprised, as a free spirit would be, at the extraordinary interest we take in things turning out one way rather than another. We are caught in the meshes of time and place and care; and as the things we have set our heart on, whatever they may be, must pass away in the end, either suddenly or by a gentle transformation, we cannot take a long view without finding life sad, and all things tragic. This aspect of vanity and self-annihilation, which existence wears when we consider its destiny, is not to be denied or explained away, as is sometimes attempted in cowardly and mincing philosophies. It is a true aspect of existence in one relation and on a certain view: but to take this long view of existence, and look down the avenues of time from the station and with the emotions of some particular moment, is by no means inevitable, nor is it a fair and sympathetic way of viewing existence. Things when they are actual do not lie in that sort of sentimental perspective, but each is centred in itself; and in this intrinsic aspect existence is nothing tragic or sad, but rather something joyful, hearty, and merry. A buoyant and full-blooded soul has quick senses and miscellaneous sympathies: it changes with the changing world; and when not too much starved or thwarted by circumstances, it finds all things vivid and comic. Life is free play fundamentally and would like to be free play altogether. In youth anything is pleasant to see or to do, so long as it is spontaneous, and if the conjunction of these things is ridiculous, so much the better: to be ridiculous is part of the fun.

Existence involves changes and happenings and is comic inherently, like a pun that begins with one meaning and ends with another. Incongruity is a consequence of change; and this incon-

gruity becomes especially conspicuous when, as in the flux of nature, change is going on at different rates in different strands of being, so that not only does each thing surprise itself by what it becomes, but it is continually astonished and disconcerted by what other things have turned into without its leave. The mishaps, the expedients, the merry solutions of comedy, in which everybody acknowledges himself beaten and deceived, yet is the happier for the unexpected posture of affairs, belong to the very texture of temporal being; and if people repine at these mishaps, or rebel against these solutions, it is only because their souls are less plastic and volatile than the general flux of nature. The individual grows old and lags behind; he remembers his old pain and resents it when the world is already on a new tack. In the jumble of existence there must be many a knock and many a grief; people living at cross purposes cannot be free from malice, and they must needs be fooled by their pretentious passions. But there is no need of taking these evils tragically. At bottom they are gratuitous, and might have been avoided if people had not pledged their hearts to things beyond their control and had not intrenched themselves in their illusions. At a sufficient remove every drama seems pathological and makes much ado about what to other people is nothing. We are interested in those vicissitudes, which we might have undergone if placed under the given circumstances; but we are happy to have escaped them. Thus the universe changes its hues like the chameleon, not at random but in a fashion which moral optics can determine, as it appears in one perspective or another: for everything in nature is lyrical in its ideal essence, tragic in its fate, and comic in its existence.

Existence is indeed distinguishable from the platonic essences that are embodied in it precisely by being a conjunction of things mutually irrelevant, a chapter of accidents, a medley improvised here and now for no reason, to the exclusion of the myriad other farces which, so far as their ideal structure is concerned, might have been performed just as well. This world is contingency and absurdity incarnate, the oddest of possibilities masquerading momentarily as a fact. Custom blinds persons who are not naturally speculative to the egregious character of the actual, because custom assimilates their expectations to the march of existing things and deadens their power to imagine anything different. But wherever the routine of a barbaric life is broken by the least acquaintance with larger ways,

the arbitrariness of the actual begins to be discovered. The traveller will first learn that his native language is not the only one, nor the best possible, nor itself constant; then, perhaps, he will understand that the same is true of his home religion and government. The naturalist will begin by marvelling at the forms and habits of the lower animals, while continuing to attribute his own to their obvious propriety; later the heavens and the earth, and all physical laws, will strike him as paradoxically arranged and unintelligible; and ultimately the very elements of existence—time, change, matter, habit, life cooped in bodies—will reveal themselves to him in their extreme oddity, so that, unless he has unusual humility and respect for fact, he will probably declare all these actual things to be impossible and therefore unreal. The most profound philosophers accordingly deny that any of those things exist which we find existing, and maintain that the only reality is changeless, infinite, and indistinguishable into parts; and I call them the most profound philosophers in spite of this obvious folly of theirs, because they are led into it by the force of intense reflection, which discloses to them that what exists is unintelligible and has no reason for existing; and since their moral and religious prejudices do not allow them to say that to be irrational and unintelligible is the character proper to existence, they are driven to the alternative of saying that existence is illusion and that the only reality is something beneath or above existence. That real existence should be radically comic never occurs to these solemn sages; they are without one ray of humour and are persuaded that the universe too must be without one. Yet there is a capital joke in their own systems, which prove that nothing exists so strenuously, that existence laughs aloud in their vociferations, and drowns the argument. Their conviction is the very ghost which it rises to exorcise: yet the conviction and the exorcism remain impressive, because they bear witness to the essential strangeness of existence to the spirit. Like the Ghost in Hamlet this apparition, this unthinkable fact, is terribly disturbing and emphatic: it cries to us in a hollow voice "Swear!" and when in an agony of concern and affection we endeavour to follow it, "'Tis here! 'Tis here! 'Tis gone!" Certainly existence can bewitch us; it can compel us to cry as well as to laugh; it can hurt, and that is its chief claim to respect. Its cruelty, however, is as casual as its enchantments; it is not cruel on purpose but

only rough, like thoughtless boys. Coarseness—and existence is hopelessly coarse—is not an evil unless we demand refinement. A giggling lass that peeps at us through her fingers is well enough in her sphere, but we should not have begun by calling her Dulcinea. Dulcinea is a pure essence, and dwells only in that realm. Existence should be met on its own terms; we may dance a round with it, and perhaps steal a kiss; but it tempts only to flout us, not being dedicated to any constant love. As if to acknowledge how groundless existence is, everything that arises instantly backs away, bowing its excuses, and saying "My mistake!" It suffers from a sort of original sin or congenital tendency to cease from being. This is what Heraclitus called $\Delta\lambda\epsilon\eta$, or just punishment; because as Mephistopheles long afterwards added, *alles was entsteht ist wert dass es zugrunde geht*; whatsoever arises deserves to perish; not of course because what arises is not often a charming creation, but because it has no prerogative to exist not shared by every Cinderella-like essence that lies eternally neglected in that limbo to which all things intrinsically belong—the limbo of unheard melodies and uncreated worlds. For anything to emerge from that twilight region is inexplicable and comic, like the popping up of Jack-in-the-box; and the shock will amuse us, if our wits are as nimble as nature and as quick at time. We too exist; and existence is a joy to the sportive side of our nature, itself akin to a shower of sparks and a patter of irrevocable adventures. What indeed could be more exhilarating than such a rout, if only we are not too exacting, and do not demand of it irrelevant perfections? The art of life is to keep step with the celestial orchestra that beats the measure of our career, and gives the cue for our exits and our entrances. Why should we willingly miss anything, or precipitate anything, or be angry with folly, or in despair at any misadventure? In this world there should be none but gentle tears, and fluttering tip-toe loves. It is a great Carnival, and amongst these lights and shadows of comedy, these roses and vices of the playhouse, there is no abiding.

TROIS POÈMES

PAR GUY-CHARLES CROS

CROQUIS DE VOYAGE

Les bas blancs de la longue fille
luisent dans l'ombre du wagon
du bout de la mince cheville
et jusqu'au bord du genou rond.

L'ombre bouge sur l'albe jambe
comme une main qui veut monter
vers le mystère d'ombre ou d'ambre \
que défend la robe entêtée...

Mais la dormeuse a fait un geste,
sa main recouvre ses genoux,
et dans le wagon il ne reste
que l'ombre et le chant noir des roues.

EN ÉCOUTANT LE PIANO

Avoir été un jeune homme
comme on en voit sur les daguerréotypes
avec une belle moustache et des favoris
parfumés a cette Eau de Cologne ancienne . . .

Sa fiancée aux bandeaux noirs et très plats
l'avait attendu des mois et des mois, fidèlement,
comme un Juif attend le Messie (du moins, je le suppose)
et puis ils s'étaient mariés un jour de mai.

Et depuis, ils ont vécu, ils ont vécu
en se fanant d'année en année,

ils ont eu des petites filles avec des crinolines
et des pantalons qui leur tombaient jusqu'aux pieds.

Ils ont eu des fils qui sont mort en 70
comme on mourait alors, en beauté, au champ d'honneur,
et des pantalons qui leur tombaient jusqu'aux pieds.
et sont allés se terrer quelque part en province . . .

—Et ces pauvres ossements, aujourd'hui,
sous une commode en marbre Louis-Philippe.

FANTÔMES

Je suis entouré de fantômes
aussi indiscutablement réels que les vivants.
Non que je sois ivre ni fou,
je sais bien que l'homme qui est assis dans ce fauteuil
peut m'allonger un coup de poing,
mais mes fantômes peuvent me faire beaucoup plus mal encore.

Je préfère ma maîtresse quand elle n'est pas là,
car alors elle ne parle pas du tout
ou répète sans se lasser les petits mots que j'aime entendre
et elle est infiniment plus elle-même.
Dès que je l'ai quittée
son jeune visage s'enfonce
doucement dans l'eau sans remous du passé.
Je ne l'ai pas vue depuis des siècles
et je ne sais pas trop si je la connais mieux
que je n'ai connu Cléopâtre.

Je m'étonne qu'il m'ait fallu tant d'années
pour que je ne sois plus prisonnier de la *réalité*,
car au fond tout cela est si simple!
A chaque instant nous sommes des dieux tout puissants,
nous faisons et dé faisons sans cesse l'espace et le temps
et ce qui n'arrive pas vaut exactement ce qui arrive.

LENA WRACE

BY MAY SINCLAIR

SHE arranged herself there, on that divan, and I knew she'd come to tell me all about it. It was wonderful, how, at forty-seven, she could still give that effect of triumph and excess, of something rich and ruinous and beautiful spread out on the brocades. The attitude showed me that her affair with Norman Hippisley was prospering; otherwise she couldn't have afforded the extravagance of it.

"I know what you want," I said. "You want me to congratulate you."

"Yes. I do."

"I congratulate you on your courage."

"Oh, you don't like him," she said placably.

"No I don't like him at all."

"He likes you," she said. "He thinks no end of your painting."

"I'm not denying he's a judge of painting. I'm not even denying he can paint a little himself."

"Better than you, Roly."

"If you allow for the singular, obscene ugliness of his imagination, yes."

"It's beautiful enough when he gets it into paint," she said.

"He makes beauty. His own beauty."

"Oh, very much his own."

"Well, *you* just go on imitating other people's—God's or somebody's."

She continued with her air of perfect reasonableness. "I know he isn't good-looking. Not half so good-looking as you are. But I like him. I like his slender little body and his clever, faded face. There's a quality about him, a distinction. And look at his eyes. *Your* mind doesn't come rushing and blazing out of your eyes, my dear."

"No. No. I'm afraid it doesn't rush. And for all the blaze—"

"Well, that's what I'm in love with, the rush, Roly, and the

blaze. And I'm in love, *for the first time*" (she underlined it) "with a man."

"Come," I said, "come."

"Oh, I know. I know you're thinking of Lawson Young and Dickey Harper."

I was.

"Well, but they don't count. I wasn't *in love* with Lawson. It was his career. If he hadn't been a Cabinet Minister; if he hadn't been so desperately gone on me; if he hadn't said it all depended on me—"

"Yes," I said. "I can see how it would go to your head."

"It didn't. It went to my heart." She was quite serious and solemn. "I held him in my hands, Roly. And he held England. I couldn't let him drop, could I? I had to think of England."

It was wonderful—Lena Wrace thinking that she thought of England.

I said "Of course. But for your political foresight and your virtuous action we should never have had Tariff Reform."

"We should never have had anything," she said. "And look at him now. Look how he's crumpled up since he left me. It's pitiful."

"It is. I'm afraid Mrs Withers doesn't care about Tariff Reform."

"Poor thing. No. Don't imagine I'm jealous of her, Roly. She hasn't got him. I mean she hasn't got what I had."

"All the same he left you. And you weren't ecstatically happy with him the last year or two."

"I daresay I'd have done better to have married you, if that's what you mean."

It wasn't what I meant. But she'd always entertained the illusion that she could marry me any minute if she wanted to; and I hadn't the heart to take it from her since it seemed to console her for the way, the really very infamous way, he had left her.

So I said, "Much better."

"It would have been so nice, so safe," she said. "But I never played for safety." Then she made one of her quick turns.

"Frances Archdale ought to marry you. Why doesn't she?"

"How should I know? Frances's reasons would be exquisite. I suppose I didn't appeal to her sense of fitness."

"Sense of fiddlesticks. She just hasn't got any temperament, that girl."

"Any temperament for me, you mean."

"I mean pure cussedness," said Lena.

"Perhaps. But, you see, if I were unfortunate enough she probably *would* marry me. If I lost my eyesight or a leg or an arm, if I couldn't sell any more pictures—"

"If you can understand Frances, you can understand me. That's how I felt about Dicky. I wasn't in love with him. I was sorry for him. I knew he'd go to pieces if I wasn't there to keep him together. Perhaps it's the maternal instinct."

"Perhaps," I said. Lena's reasons for her behaviour amused me; they were never exquisite, like Frances's, but she was anxious that you should think they were.

"So you see," she said, "they don't count, and Norry, really *is* the first."

I reflected that he would be also, probably, the last. She had, no doubt, to make the most of him. But it was preposterous that she should waste so much good passion; preposterous that she should imagine for one moment she could keep the fellow. I had to warn her.

"Of course, if you care to take the risk of him—" I said. "He won't stick to you, Lena."

"Why shouldn't he?"

I couldn't tell her. I couldn't say, "Because you're thirteen years older than he is." That would have been cruel. And it would have been absurd, too, when she could so easily look not a year older than his desiccated thirty-four. It only took a little success like this, her actual triumph in securing him.

So I said, "Because it isn't in him. He's a bounder and a rotter." Which was true.

"Not a bounder, Roly dear. His father's Sir Gilbert Hippisley. Hippisleys of Leicestershire."

"A moral bounder, Lena. A slimy eel. Slips and wriggles out of things. You'll never hold him. You're not his first affair, you know."

"I don't care," she said, "as long as I'm his last."

I could only stand and stare at that; her monstrous assumption of his fidelity. Why, he couldn't even be faithful to one art. He

wrote as well as he painted, and he acted as well as he wrote, and he was never really happy with a talent till he had debauched it.

"The others," she said, "don't bother me a bit. He's slipped and wriggled out of their clutches, if you like. . . . Yet there was something about all of them. Distinguished. That's it. He's so awfully fine and fastidious about the women he takes up with. It flatters you, makes you feel so sure of yourself. You know he wouldn't take up with *you* if you weren't fine and fastidious, too—one of his great ladies. . . . You think I'm a snob, Roly?"

"I think you don't mind coming *after* Lady Willersey."

"Well," she said, "if you *have* to come after somebody—"

"True." I asked her if she was giving me her reasons.

"Yes, if you want them. I don't. I'm content to love out of all reason."

And she did. She loved extravagantly, unintelligibly, out of all reason; yet irrefutably. To the end. There's a sort of reason in that, isn't there? She had the sad logic of her passions.

She got up and gathered herself together in her sombre, violent beauty and in its glittering sheath, her red fox skins, all her savage splendour, leaving a scent of crushed orris root in the warmth of her lair.

Well, she managed to hold him, tight, for a year, fairly intact. I can't for the life of me imagine how she could have cared for the fellow, with his face all dried and frayed with make-up. There was something lithe and sinuous about him that may, of course, have appealed to her. And I can understand his infatuation. He was decadent, exhausted; and there would be moments when he found her primitive violence stimulating, before it wore him out.

They kept up the *ménage* for two astounding years.

Well, not so very astounding, if you come to think of it. There was Lena's money, left her by old Weinberger, her maternal uncle. You've got to reckon with Lena's money. Not that she, poor soul, ever reckoned with it; she was absolutely free from that taint, and she couldn't conceive other people reckoning. Only, instinctively, she knew. She knew how to hold Hippisley. She knew there were things he couldn't resist, things like wines and motor cars he could be faithful to. From the very beginning she built for permanence, for eternity. She took a house in Avenue Road

with a studio for Hippisley in the garden; she bought a motor car and engaged an inestimable cook. Lena's dinners, in those years, were exquisite affairs, and she took care to ask the right people, people who would be useful to Hippisley, dealers whom old Weinberger had known, and journalists and editors and publishers. And all his friends and her own; even friends' friends. Her hospitality was boundless and eccentric, and Hippisley liked that sort of thing. He thrived in a liberal air, an air of gorgeous spending, though he sported a supercilious smile at the *foritura*, the luscious excess of it. He had never had too much, poor devil, of his own. I've seen the little fellow swaggering about at her parties, with his sharp, frayed face, looking fine and fastidious, safeguarding himself with twinklings and gestures that gave the dear woman away. I've seen him, in goggles and a magnificent fur-lined coat, shouting to her chauffeur, giving counter orders to her own, while she sat snuggling up in the corner of the car, smiling at his mastery.

It went on till poor Lena was forty-nine. Then, as she said, she began to "shake in her shoes." I told her it didn't matter so long as she didn't let him see her shaking. That depressed her, because she knew she couldn't hide it; there was nothing secret in her nature; she had always let "them" see. And they were bothering her—"the others"—more than "a bit." She was jealous of every one of them, of any woman he said more than five words to. Jealous of the models, first of all, before she found out that they didn't matter; he was so used to them. She would stick there, in his studio, while they sat, until one day he got furious and turned her out of it. But she'd seen enough to set her mind at rest. He was fine and fastidious, and the models were all "common."

"And their figures, Roly, you should have seen them when they were undressed. Of course, you *have* seen them. Well, there isn't—is there?"

And there wasn't. Hippisley had grown out of models just as he had grown out of cheap Burgundy. And he'd left the stage, because he was tired of it, so there was, mercifully, no danger from that quarter. What she dreaded was the moment when he'd "take" to writing again, for then he'd have to have a secretary. Also she was jealous of his writing because it absorbed more of

his attention than his painting, and exhausted him more, left her less of him.

And that year, their third year, he flung up his painting and was as she expressed it, "at it" again. Worse than ever. And he wanted a secretary.

She took care to find him one. One who wouldn't be dangerous. "You should just see her, Roly." She brought her in to tea one day for me to look at and say whether she would "do."

I wasn't sure—what can you be sure of?—but I could see why Lena thought she would. She was a little unhealthy thing, dark and sallow and sulky, with thin lips that showed a lack of temperament, and she had a stiffness and preciseness, like a Board School teacher—just that touch of "commonness" which Lena relied on to put him off. She wore a shabby brown skirt and a yellowish blouse. Her name was Ethel Reeves.

Lena had secured safety, she said, in the house. But what was the good of that, when outside it he was going about everywhere with Sybil Fermor? She came and told me all about it, with a sort of hope that I'd say something either consoling or revealing, something that she could go on.

"You know him, Roly," she said.

I reminded her that she hadn't always given me that credit.

"I know how he spends his time," she said.

"How do you know?"

"Well, for one thing, Ethel tells me."

"How does she know?"

"She—she posts the letters."

"Does she read them?"

"She needn't. He's too transparent."

"Lena, do you use her to spy on him?" I said.

"Well," she retorted, "if he uses her—"

I asked her if it hadn't struck her that Sybil Fermor might be using him?

"Do you mean—as a *paravent*? Or," she revised it, "a parachute?"

"For Bertie Granville," I elucidated. "A parachute, by all means."

She considered it. "It won't work," she said. "If it's her reputation she's thinking of, wouldn't Norry be worse?"

I said that was the beauty of him, if Letty Granville's attention was to be diverted.

"Oh, Roly," she said, "do you really think it's that?"

I said I did, and she powdered her nose and said I was a dear and I'd bucked her up no end, and went away quite happy.

Letty Granville's divorce suit proved to her that I was right.

The next time I saw her she told me she'd been mistaken about Sybil Fermor. It was Lady Hermione Nevin. Norry had been using Sybil as a "*paravent*" for her. I said she was wrong again. Didn't she know that Hermione was engaged to Billy Craven? They were head over ears in love with each other. I asked her what on earth had made her think of her? And she said Lady Hermione had paid him thirty guineas for a picture. That looked, she said, as if she was pretty far gone on him. (She tended to disparage Hippisley's talents. Jealousy again.)

I said it looked as if he had the iciest reasons for cultivating Lady Hermione. And again she told me I was a dear. "You don't know, Roly, what a comfort you are to me."

Then Barbara Vining turned up out of nowhere, and from the first minute Lena gave herself up for lost.

"I'm done for," she said. "I'd fight her if it was any good fighting. But what chance have I? At forty-nine against nineteen, and that face?"

The face was adorable if you adore a child's face on a woman's body. Small and pink; a soft, innocent forehead; fawn skin hair, a fawn's nose, a fawn's mouth, a fawn's eyes. You saw her at Lena's garden parties, staring at Hippisley over the rim of her plate while she browsed on Lena's cakes and ices, or bounding about Lena's tennis court with the sash ribbons flying from her little butt end.

Oh, yes; she had her there. As much as he wanted. And there would be Ethel Reeves, in a new blouse, looking on from a back seat, subtle and sullen, or handing round cups and plates without speaking to anybody, like a servant. I used to think she spied on them for Lena. They were always mouching about the garden together or sitting secretly in corners; Lena even had her to stay with them, let him take her for long drives in her car. She knew when she was beaten.

I said, "Why do you let him do it, Lena? Why don't you turn them both neck and crop out of the house?"

"Because I want him in it. I want him at any cost. And I want him to have what he wants, too, even if it's Barbara. I want him to be happy. . . . I'm making a virtue of necessity. It can be done, Roly, if you give up beautifully."

I put it to her it wasn't giving up beautifully to fret herself into an unbecoming illness, to carry her disaster on her face. She would come to me looking more ruined than ruinous, haggard and ashy, her eyes all shrunk and hot with crying, and stand before the glass, looking at herself and dabbing on powder in an utter abandonment to misery.

"I know," she moaned. "As if losing him wasn't enough I must go and lose my looks. I know crying's simply suicidal at my age, yet I keep on at it. I'm doing for myself. I'm digging my own grave, Roly. A little deeper every day."

Then she said suddenly, "Do you know, you're the only man in London I could come to looking like this."

I said, "Isn't that a bit unkind of you? It sounds as though you thought I didn't matter."

She broke down on that. "Can't you see it's because I know I don't any more? Nobody cares whether my nose is red or not. But you're not a brute. You don't let me feel I don't matter. I know I never did matter to you, Roly, but the effect's soothing, all the same. . . . Ethel says if she were me she wouldn't stand it. To have it going on under my nose. Ethel is so high-minded. I suppose it's easy to be high-minded if you've always looked like that. And if you've never *had* anybody. She doesn't know what it is. I tell you, I'd rather have Norry there with Barbara than not have him at all."

I thought and said that would just about suit Hippisley's book. He'd rather be there than anywhere else, since he had to be somewhere. To be sure she irritated him with her perpetual clinging, and wore him out. I've seen him wince at the sound of her voice in the room. He'd say things to her; not often, but just enough to see how far he could go. He was afraid of going too far. He wasn't prepared to give up the comfort of Lena's house, the opulence and peace. There wasn't one of Lena's wines he could have turned his back on. After all, when she worried him he could keep himself locked up in the studio away from her.

There was Ethel Reeves; but Lena didn't worry about his being locked up with *her*. She was very kind to Hippisley's sec-

retary. Since she wasn't dangerous, she liked to see her there, well housed, eating rich food, and getting stronger and stronger every day.

I must say my heart bled for Lena when I thought of young Barbara. It was still bleeding when one afternoon she walked in with her old triumphant look; she wore her hat with an *air crâne*, and the powder on her face was even and intact, like the first pure fall of snow. She looked ten years younger and I judged that Hippisley's affair with Barbara was at an end.

Well—it had never had a beginning; nor the ghost of a beginning. It had never happened at all. She had come to tell me that: that there was nothing in it; nothing but her jealousy; the miserable, damnable jealousy that made her think things. She said it would be a lesson to her to trust him in the future not to go falling in love. For, she argued, if he hadn't done it this time with Barbara, he'd never do it.

I asked her how she knew he hadn't, this time, when appearances all pointed that way? And she said that Barbara had come and told her. Somebody, it seemed, had been telling Barbara it was known that she'd taken Hippisley from Lena, and that Lena was crying herself into a nervous break-down. And the child had gone straight to Lena and told her it was a beastly lie. She hadn't taken Hippisley. She liked ragging with him and all that, and being seen about with him at parties, because he was a celebrity and it made the other women, the women he wouldn't talk to, furious. But as for taking him, why, she wouldn't take him from anybody as a gift. She didn't want him, a scrubby old thing like that. She didn't *like* that dragged look about his mouth and the way the skin wrinkled on his eyelids. There was a sincerity about Barbara that would have blasted Hippisley if he'd known.

Besides, she wouldn't have hurt Lena for the world. She wouldn't have spoken to Norry if she'd dreamed that Lena minded. But Lena had seemed so remarkably not to mind. When she came to that part of it she cried.

Lena said that was all very well, and it didn't matter whether Barbara was in love with Norry or not; but how did she know Norry wasn't in love with *her*? And Barbara replied amazingly that of course she knew. They'd been alone together.

When I remarked that it was precisely *that*, Lena said, No.

That was nothing in itself; but it would prove one way or another; and it seemed that when Norry found himself alone with Barbara, he used to yawn.

After that Lena settled down to a period of felicity. She'd come to me, excited and exulting, bringing her poor little happiness with her like a new toy. She'd sit there looking at it, turning it over and over, and holding it up to me to show how beautiful it was.

She pointed out to me that I had been wrong and she right about him, from the beginning. She knew him.

"And to think what a fool, what a damned silly fool I was, with my jealousy. When all those years there was never anybody but me. Do you remember Sybil Fermor, and Lady Hermione—and Barbara? To think I should have so clean forgotten what he was like. . . . Don't you think, Roly, there must be something in me, after all, to have kept him all those years?"

I said there must indeed have been, to have inspired so remarkable a passion. For Hippisley was making love to her all over again. Their happy relations were proclaimed, not only by her own engaging frankness, but still more by the marvellous renaissance of her beauty. She had given up her habit of jealousy as she had given up eating sweets, because both were murderous to her complexion. Not that Hippisley gave her any cause. He had ceased to cultivate the society of young and pretty ladies, and devoted himself with almost ostentatious fidelity to Lena. Their affair had become irreproachable with time; it had the permanence of a successful marriage without the unflattering element of legal obligation. And he had kept his secretary. Lena had left off being afraid either that Ethel would leave or that Hippisley would put some dangerous woman in her place.

There was no change in Ethel, except that she looked rather more subtle and less sullen. Lena ignored her subtlety as she had ignored her sulks. She had no more use for her as a confidant and spy, and Ethel lived in a back den off Hippisley's study with her Remington, and displayed a convenient apathy in allowing herself to be ignored.

"Really," Lena would say in the unusual moments when she thought of her, "if it wasn't for the clicking, you wouldn't know she was there."

And as a secretary she maintained, up to the last, an admirable efficiency.

Up to the last.

It was Hippisley's death that ended it. You know how it happened—suddenly, of heart failure, in Paris. He'd gone there with Furnival to get material for that book they were doing together. Lena was literally "prostrated" with the shock; and Ethel Reeves had to go over to Paris to bring back his papers and his body.

It was the day after the funeral that it all came out. Lena and Ethel were sitting up together over the papers and the letters, turning out his bureau. I suppose that, in the grand immunity his death conferred on her, poor Lena had become provokingly possessive. I can hear her saying to Ethel that there had never been anybody but her, all those years. Praising his faithfulness; holding out her dead happiness, and apologizing to Ethel for talking about it when Ethel didn't understand, never having had any.

She must have said something like that, to bring it on herself, just then, of all moments.

And I can see Ethel Reeves, sitting at his table, stolidly sorting out his papers, wishing that Lena'd go away and leave her to her work. And her sullen eyes firing out questions, asking her what she wanted, what she had to do with Norman Hippisley's papers, what she was there for, fussing about, when it was all over?

What she wanted—what she had come for—was her letters. They were locked up in his bureau in the secret drawer.

She told me what had happened then. Ethel lifted her sullen, subtle eyes and said, "You think he kept them?"

She said she knew he'd kept them. They were in that drawer.

And Ethel said, "Well then, he didn't. They aren't. He burnt them. *We* burnt them. . . . We could, at least, get rid of them!"

Then she threw it at her. She had been Hippisley's mistress for three years.

When Lena asked for proofs of the incredible assertion she had *her* letters to show.

Oh, it was her moment. She must have been looking out for it, saving up for it, all those years; gloating over her exquisite secret,

her return for all the slighting and ignoring. That was what had made her poisonous, the fact that Lena hadn't reckoned with her, hadn't thought her dangerous, hadn't been afraid to leave Hippisley with her, the rich, arrogant contempt in her assumption that Ethel would "do," and her comfortable confidences. It made her amorous and malignant. It stimulated her to the attempt.

I think she must have hated Lena more vehemently than she loved Hippisley. She couldn't, *then*, have had much reliance on her power to capture; but her hatred was a perpetual suggestion. Supposing—supposing she were to try and take him?

Then she had tried.

I daresay she hadn't much difficulty. Hippisley wasn't quite so fine and fastidious as Lena thought him. I've no doubt he liked Ethel's unwholesomeness, just as he had liked the touch of morbidity in Lena.

And the spying? That had been all part of the game; his and Ethel's. *They* played for safety, if you like. They had *had* to throw Lena off the scent. They used Sybil Fermor and Lady Hermione and Barbara Vining, one after the other, as their *paravents*. Finally they had used Lena. That was their cleverest stroke. It brought them a permanent security. For, you see, Hippisley wasn't going to give up his free quarters, his studio, the dinners and the motor car, if he could help it. Not for Ethel. And Ethel knew it. They insured her, too.

Can't you see her, letting herself go in an ecstasy of revenge, winding up with a hysterical youp? "You? You thought it was you? It was me—*me*—ME. . . . You thought what we meant you to think."

Lena still comes and talks to me. To hear her you would suppose that Lawson Young and Dicky Harper never existed, that her passion for Norman Hippisley was the unique, solitary manifestation of her soul. It certainly burnt with the intensest flame. It certainly consumed her. What's left of her's all shrivelled, warped, as she writhed in her fire.

Yesterday she said to me, "Roly, I'm *glad* he's dead. Safe from her clutches."

She'll cling for a little while to this last illusion: that he had been reluctant; but I doubt if she really believes it now.

For you see, Ethel flourishes. In passion, you know, nothing

succeeds like success; and her affair with Norman Hippisley advertised her, so that very soon it ranked as the first of a series of successes. She goes about dressed in stained-glass futurist muslins, and contrives provocative effects out of a tilted nose, and sulky eyes, and sallowness set off by a black velvet band on the forehead, and a black scarf of hair dragged tight from a raking backward peak.

I saw her the other night sketching a frivolous gesture—

LA RÉPONSE DE GEORGES MOORE EN FORME DE
SONNET À SON AMI ÉDOUARD DUJARDIN (L'AU-
TEUR DE "LA SOURCE DU FLEUVE CHRÉ-
TIEN") QUI L'AVAIT INVITÉ À BLOIS
POUR MANGER DE L'ALOSE.

La chair est bonne de l'alose
Plus fine que celle du bar,
Mais la Loire est loin et je n'ose
Abandonner Pierre Abélard.

Je suis un esclave de l'art;
La sage Héloïse se pose
Sans robe, sans coiffe et sans fard,
Et j'oublie aisément l'alose.

Mais je vois la claire maison—
Arbres, pelouses et statue.
Dujardin, j'entend ta leçon:

Raison qui sauve, foi qui tue,
Autels éclaboussés du son
Que verse une idole abattue.

THE TRUTH ABOUT "LITERARY LYNCHING"

BY JOHN S. SUMNER

IN several decisions, the Supreme Court of the United States has placed on a par with the public safety and the public health, what is known as the public morals. We have special departments which give their entire time to safeguarding public health. We have police departments to counteract influences and conditions affecting the public safety. We have laws for the protection of the public morals, the enforcement of which is divided between police and licensing authorities and, as a consequence, where there is divided responsibility there is a tendency to "let George do it."

But what is the situation regarding the enforcement of any criminal law? Is the policeman who makes the arrest the chief witness? Certainly not, in the majority of cases. The citizen witness who is subpoenaed to court and who is frequently deprived of freedom of movement quite as much as is the defendant, is the person on whose testimony the complaint stands or falls. He is the one who can testify to his own knowledge of the facts which disclose whether or not the law has been violated.

In a simple state of society where there is no great pressure of criminal procedure in a multitude of tribunals of varying jurisdiction, the ordinary citizen might very well lodge complaint against an offender against a general statute to protect public morals and see the case through without any great inconvenience to himself. Theoretically that is the duty of every citizen.

In a city like New York, let us follow the course of an ordinary prosecution undertaken by The New York Society for the Suppression of Vice against the seller of an obscene picture. A complaint, usually anonymous, is received to the effect that at a certain store post-card photographs of an obscene character are being sold. An agent of the Society is sent to investigate. If the articles are being sold openly, he will buy one or more as evidence of a sale, making note of the seller for future identification; and of the place, date, and price involved, as evidence. If the photographs are being secretly disposed of, considerable ingenuity and time may be con-

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sumed before evidence is secured. If, in the opinion of experienced officers and agents of the Society, the sale of the photos purchased, based on the character of the photos, constitutes a violation of the law, a complaint is prepared setting forth the transaction, describing the photos and giving other necessary facts, and praying for the issuance of a summons or warrant, as the case may be, and also a search warrant. These papers are also prepared. A visit is then made to the Magistrate's Court, which must be the court having jurisdiction in the district wherein the transaction took place. Here the photos, complaint, and other papers are submitted to the Magistrate. If, in his opinion, the photos warrant action and the papers are correctly prepared, he will sign the complaint, which must be sworn to by the agent who made the purchase, and will also issue the summons or warrant and the search warrant. The complaint is filed with the clerk of the court and the warrants delivered to the warrant officer of the court. The agent then accompanies the warrant officer to the premises where he purchased the photos. If the seller is on hand immediate action is taken. If he is absent, the agent and officer must either await his return or make a later call. If the seller is present he is placed under arrest or served with summons, as the case may be, and the search warrant is executed by taking possession of all the matters found in the premises which are authorized to be seized under the terms of the search warrant. The agent then returns to the Magistrate's Court and the officer takes the prisoner, in the case of a warrant, to the police station in the district of the arrest where certain entries are made on the station house blotter. If action is by summons, it may be returnable on the same or a later day. When the defendant is actually in court there may be a lapse of from half an hour to two hours before he is arraigned. He probably desires the services of counsel and the case is adjourned to another day to enable him to secure legal aid. On the adjourned day the agent again appears ready to testify, but more than likely defendant's counsel has not had time to examine the case and asks for another adjournment. In other words, the agent, who is the complaining witness, is required to appear in the Magistrate's Court, ordinarily, from two to four times. Finally there is an examination and the defendant is either discharged or held for trial in the Court of Special Sessions. After about two weeks, the agent receives a subpoena to appear in the trial court

on a certain day. On that day he and the defendant appear, the latter ordinarily pleads "not guilty" and the case is set down for trial on a subsequent day. On that day the parties again appear, and the probabilities are that the defendant will ask for an adjournment and get it. In other words, the agent must appear in the trial court, ordinarily, from two to four times and then the case is tried and the defendant is either acquitted or convicted.

Here is a possibility, in fact a probability, of eight appearances in court in addition to the preliminary securing of evidence and presentation thereof to the magistrate.

Now bear in mind that the offense of the defendant is an offense against society, the placing in traffic and in circulation of something which experience has shown is detrimental to the public well-being. He has done nothing which would necessarily harm the complaining witness, be he agent or ordinary citizen. He has caused no personal injury, as in larceny or assault, but he has violated a law enacted in the interests of society in general, one which the Supreme Court of the United States places on a par with laws in the interest of public health and public safety.

Under the circumstances, what ordinary citizen who knows of the offence and also knows of the necessary expenditure of time in enforcing the law, is going to act? What ordinary citizen can afford to act?

It was a realization of this situation, almost fifty years ago, which induced public-spirited citizens to unite and organize The New York Society for the Suppression of Vice, an agency to receive the complaint of the ordinary citizen and be his proxy in enforcing the law.

It was the same situation with regard to "disorderly resorts" which, in 1905, brought about the organization of the Committee of Fourteen. Where there are so many subdivisions of commercialized vice, it is apparent that a city official having jurisdiction over the whole field cannot specialize in any one feature, and yet he cannot do the most effective work by carrying out a general, even though sincere, programme of vice suppression.

It may be, and has been said, that no one objects to the activities of the Society in relation to admittedly obscene photographs, but where each photograph has to stand on its own merits and where the degree of obscenity is a constantly varying factor, who can say

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that any particular photograph is admittedly obscene within the meaning of the law until it has been passed upon by a trial court?

The same law, in the same terms, applies to books or other forms of printed matter. A certain book may impress the general reader as being palpably obscene. Another book may impress a smaller number of readers in the same way. On still another book the adverse opinion of only one person may have been expressed. Who is to determine the question if not the courts maintained for that purpose? In view of the hardships imposed upon the citizen complainant in such a case, who is to bring the question before the court if not the agency constituted for that special purpose and maintained for that purpose by the public as its proxy?

If that agency shows any partiality what is its public value? If it hesitates to act because the publisher is a wealthy corporation or because the author has previously published one or more reputable books, or because his previous work or even the work complained of has been praised by people of note, what is its justification? It is just exactly this desired partiality or utter non-enforcement of law in some quarters which gives ground for the frequent assertion that there is one law for this class and another law for that class and which breeds contempt for the law in general and creates anarchists. The New York Society for the Suppression of Vice declines to be a party to any such cause.

We are not censors of art or literature, but an agency to function after an act committed. If, as a result of our activities, those who are inclined to skate on thin ice are made more cautious, society is benefitted and this organization is fulfilling its purpose.

When one resorts to epithet it is invariably a sign of a lack of argument which would appeal to the intellect. That seems to be the dilemma in which Mr Ernest Boyd finds himself when he seeks to defend objectionable publications.

He finds fault with the prosecution of the publishers of *The Little Review*. For his information and the information of the public the facts in regard to that prosecution are exactly in line with the general procedure above set forth.

On August 30, 1920, the District Attorney of New York County received from a reputable citizen in business on lower Broadway a letter in long hand upon the letterhead of the complainant, as follows:

"Dear Sir:

"I enclose a copy under another cover—of a copy of 'The Little Review' which was sent to my daughter unsolicited. Please read the passages marked on pages 43, 45, 50 and 51. If such indecencies don't come within the provisions of the Postal Laws then isn't there some way in which the circulation of such things can be confined among the people who buy or subscribe to a publication of this kind? Surely there must be some way of keeping such 'literature' out of the homes of people who don't want it even if, in the interests of morality, there is no means of suppressing it."

This letter was assigned to an Assistant District Attorney who telephoned to the Secretary of The New York Society for the Suppression of Vice requesting that he call and confer regarding a certain matter. The result of that conference was an agreement of opinion that the matter complained of was a violation of the law. However, this opinion did not control and before any action was taken the opinion of a magistrate was sought. Owing to various delays the examination was finally held before a succeeding magistrate and he, too, concurred in the opinion of the District Attorney. Finally the case came to trial and three Justices of the Court of Special Sessions were of the same opinion and there was a conviction.

In his innocence, Mr Boyd will no doubt inquire why the District Attorney should have enlisted the services of The New York Society for the Suppression of Vice. The answer is simple. It is not the business of the District Attorney's staff to appear in court as complaining witnesses. Their business is to sift evidence brought to them to determine whether or not a criminal offense has been committed and advise as to further procedure and appear in court for the people. Of course, John Doe could have been called in from the street and requested to act as complaining witness in The Little Review case, but John Doe would just as certainly have declined the honour because he had a family to support and his time was entirely taken up with the business which was his livelihood. Was the District Attorney to wink at this violation of the law because Mr Boyd and some others are hysterical on the subject of "lynch law in the arts"?

As to Jurgen, a grand jury composed of men of more than

ordinary intelligence took a very brief time to concur in the opinion of the magistrate who originally passed upon it, but this is a pending case and propriety calls for a suspension of judgement or of criticism pending trial.

Mr Boyd doesn't know it, but of course his mental attitude is that there should be no interference whatsoever with so-called literature. When he says: "the natural procedure would be to rely upon the properly constituted authorities to see that no offence is committed," he is indulging in loose talk. Without the power of pre-publication review how could the "constituted authorities" or any other agency "see that no offence is committed"? Under our system there must be an offence committed before these "properly constituted authorities" can properly act. Possibly Mr Boyd favours for "art" the method of control which has recently been enacted for the motion pictures.

There are a great many people in this country who like to bring forward something "foreign" and hold it forth as an example of the way things should be done over here. Possibly a complete research would divulge decisions by Magistrates' Courts in France which would appear to Mr Boyd just as "uncivilized" as what he complains of amid the domestic output. On the other hand, a little research would disclose American decisions quite as "civilized" as the decision in the *Madame Bovary* case and entirely pleasing to Mr Boyd because they were decisions adverse to the contention of the prosecution and in favour of "art."

[As might be expected, Mr Sumner endeavours to prove that the Society which employs him is essential to the moral welfare of America. By implication all other countries are abandoned to the devils of pornography, since they are deprived of the disinterested activities of such societies. My article produced specific evidence of the contrary, and therefore proved that, without these organizations of self-appointed moral experts, art and literature are effectively controlled all over the civilized world. That Mr Sumner should try to defend his job is not surprising, but that he should imagine he has dealt with my criticism is astonishing. I can only conclude that plain English is as incomprehensible to Mr Sumner as art, which he confounds with dirty post cards.

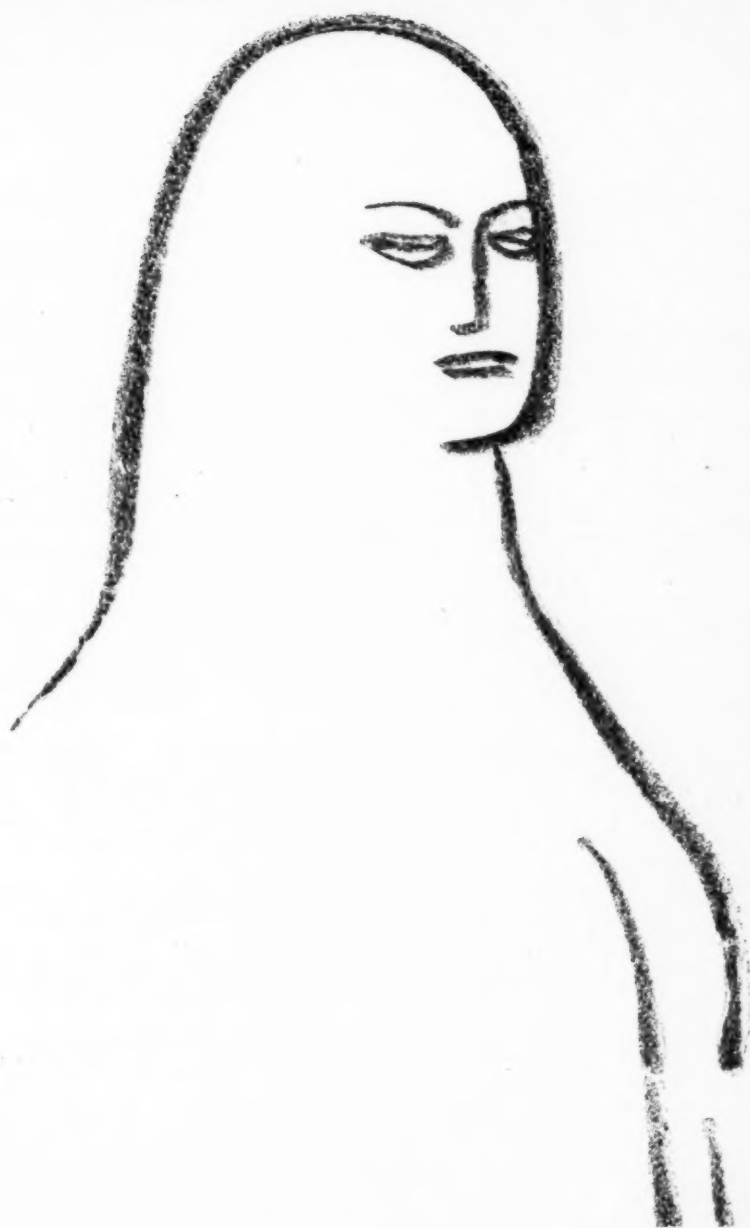
—ERNEST BOYD]



A DRAWING. BY GASTON LACHAISE



A DRAWING. BY GASTON LACHAISE



A DRAWING. BY GASTON LACHAISE

TWO POEMS

BY WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS

THE BIRDS

The world begins again.
Not wholly insuflated
the blackbirds in the rain
upon the dead top-branches
of the living tree,
stuck fast to the low clouds,
notate the dawn.
Their shrill cries sound
announcing appetite
and drop among the bending roses
and the dripping grass.

YOUTH AND BEAUTY

I bought a dish-mop—
having no daughter—
for they had twisted
fine ribbons of shining copper
about white twine
and made a trowsled head
of it, fastened it
upon a turned ash stick
slender at the neck,
straight, tall—
when tied upright
on the brass wall-bracket
to be a light for me—
and naked,
as a girl should seem
to her father.

FOUR YEARS

1887-1891

BY WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS

X

I CANNOT remember who first brought me to the old stable beside Kelmscott House, William Morris' house at Hammer-smith, and to the debates held there upon Sunday evenings by the Socialist League. I was soon of the little group who had supper with Morris afterwards. I met at these suppers very constantly Walter Crane, Emery Walker, afterwards, in association with Cobden Sanderson, the printer of many fine books, and less constantly Bernard Shaw and Cockerell, now of the museum at Cambridge, and perhaps but once or twice Hyndman, the socialist, and the anarchist Prince Kropotkin. There, too, one always met certain more or less educated workmen, rough of speech and manner, with a conviction to meet every turn. I was told by one of them, on a night when I had done perhaps more than my share of the talking, that I had talked more nonsense in one evening than he had heard in the whole course of his past life. I had merely preferred Parnell, then at the height of his career, to Michael Davitt who had wrecked his Irish influence by international politics. We sat round a long unpolished and unpainted trestle table of new wood in a room where hung Rossetti's Pomegranate, a portrait of Mrs Morris, and where one wall and part of the ceiling were covered by a great Persian carpet. Morris had said somewhere or other that carpets were meant for people who took their shoes off when they entered a house, and were most in place upon a tent floor. I was a little disappointed in the house, for Morris was an old man content at last to gather beautiful things rather than to arrange a beautiful house. I saw the drawing room once or twice, and there alone all my sense of decoration, founded upon the background of Rossetti's pictures, was satisfied by a big cupboard painted with a scene from Chaucer by Burne-Jones, but even there were

objects, perhaps a chair or a little table, that seemed accidental, bought hurriedly perhaps, and with little thought, to make wife or daughter comfortable. I had read as a boy in books belonging to my father, the third volume of *The Earthly Paradise* and *The Defence of Guinevere*, which pleased me less, but had not opened either for a long time. *The Man Who Never Laughed Again* had seemed the most wonderful of tales till my father had accused me of preferring Morris to Keats, got angry about it, and put me altogether out of countenance. He had spoiled my pleasure, for now I questioned while I read and at last ceased to read, nor had Morris written as yet those prose romances that became, after his death, so great a joy that they were the only books I was ever to read slowly that I might not come too quickly to the end. It was now Morris himself that stirred my interest, and I took to him first because of some little tricks of speech and body that reminded me of my old grandfather in Sligo, but soon discovered his spontaneity and joy and made him my chief of men. To-day I do not set his poetry very high, but for an odd altogether wonderful line, or thought; and yet, if some angel offered me the choice, I would choose to live his life, poetry and all, rather than my own or any other man's. A reproduction of his portrait by Watts hangs over my mantelpiece with Henley's, and those of other friends. Its grave wide-open eyes, like the eyes of some dreaming beast, remind me of the open eyes of Titian's Ariosto, while the broad vigorous body suggests a mind that has no need of the intellect to remain sane, though it give itself to every phantasy: the dreamer of the middle ages. It is "the fool of fairy . . . wide and wild as a hill," the resolute European image that yet half remembers Buddha's motionless meditation, and has no trait in common with the wavering, lean image of hungry speculation, that cannot but fill the mind's eye because of certain famous Hamlets of our stage. Shakespeare himself foreshadowed a symbolic change, that shows a change in the whole temperament of the world, for though he called his Hamlet "fat" and even "scant of breath," he thrust between his fingers agile rapier and dagger.

The dream world of Morris was as much the antithesis of daily life as with other men of genius, but he was never conscious of the antithesis and so knew nothing of intellectual suffering. His intellect, unexhausted by speculation or casuistry, was wholly at the

service of hand and eye, and whatever he pleased he did with an unheard of ease and simplicity, and if style and vocabulary were at times monotonous, he could not have made them otherwise without ceasing to be himself. Instead of the language of Chaucer and Shakespeare, its warp fresh from field and market, if the woof were learned, his age offered him a speech, exhausted from abstraction, that only returned to its full vitality when written learnedly and slowly.

The roots of his antithetical dream were visible enough: a never idle man of great physical strength and extremely irascible—did he not fling a badly baked plum pudding through the window upon Christmas Day?—a man more joyous than any intellectual man of our world, called himself “the idle singer of an empty day,” created new forms of melancholy, and faint persons, like the knights and ladies of Burne-Jones, who are never, no not once in forty volumes, put out of temper. A blunderer who had said to the only unconverted man at a socialist picnic in Dublin, to prove that equality came easy, “I was brought up a gentleman and now, as you can see, associate with all sorts,” and left wounds thereby that rankled after twenty years, a man of whom I have heard it said “He is always afraid that he is doing something wrong, and generally is,” wrote long stories with apparently no other object than that his persons might show one another, through situations of poignant difficulty, the most exquisite tact.

He did not project, like Henley or like Wilde, an image of himself, because, having all his imagination set on making and doing, he had little self-knowledge. He imagined instead new conditions of making and doing; and, in the teeth of those scientific generalizations that cowed my boyhood, I can see some like imagining in every great change, believing that the first flying fish first leapt, not because it sought “adaptation” to the air, but out of horror of the sea.

XI

Soon after I began to attend the lectures a French class was started in the old coach-house, for certain young socialists who planned a tour in France, and I joined it; and was for a time a model student constantly encouraged by the compliments of the

old French mistress. I told my father of the class, and he asked me to get my sisters admitted. I made difficulties and put off speaking of the matter, for I knew that the new and admirable self I was making would turn, under family eyes, into plain rag doll; how could I pretend to be industrious, and even carry dramatization to the point of learning my lessons, when my sisters were there and knew that I was nothing of the sort; but I had no argument I could use and my sisters were admitted. They said nothing unkind, so far as I can remember, but in a week or two I was my old procrastinating idle self and had soon left the class altogether. My elder sister stayed on and became an embroideress under Miss May Morris, and the hangings round Morris' big bed at Kelmscott House, Oxfordshire, with their verses about lying happily in bed, when "all birds sing in the town of the tree," were from her needle though not from her design. She worked for the first few months at Kelmscott House, Hammersmith, and in my imagination I cannot always separate what I saw and heard from her report, or indeed from the report of that tribe or guild who looked up to Morris as to some worshipped mediaeval king. He had no need for other people. I doubt if their marriage or death made him sad or glad, and yet no man I have known was so well loved; you saw him producing everywhere organization and beauty, seeming, almost in the same instant, helpless and triumphant; and people loved him as children are loved. People much in his neighbourhood became gradually occupied with him, or about his affairs, and without any wish on his part, as simple people become occupied with children. I remember a man who was proud and pleased because he had distracted Morris' thoughts from an attack of gout by leading the conversation delicately to the hated name of Milton. He began at Swinburne: "O Swinburne," said Morris, "is a rhetorician; my masters have been Keats and Chaucer for they make pictures." "Does not Milton make pictures?" asked my informant. "No," was the answer, "Dante makes pictures but Milton, though he had a great earnest mind, expressed himself as a rhetorician." "Great earnest mind," sounded strange to me and I doubt not that were his questioner not a simple man Morris had been more violent. Another day the same man started by praising Chaucer, but the gout was worse and Morris cursed Chaucer for destroying the English language with foreign words.

He had few detachable phrases and I can remember little of his speech, which many thought the best of all good talk, except that it matched his burly body and seemed within definite boundaries inexhaustible in fact and expression. He alone of all the men I have known seemed guided by some beast-like instinct and never ate strange meat. "Balzac! Balzac!" he said to me once, "oh, that was the man the French Bourgeoisie read so much a few years ago." I can remember him at supper praising wine: "Why do people say it is prosaic to be inspired by wine? Has it not been made by the sunlight and the sap?" and his dispraising houses decorated by himself: "Do you suppose I like that kind of house? I would like a house like a big barn, where one ate in one corner, cooked in another corner, slept in the third corner, and in the fourth received one's friends"; and his complaining of Ruskin's objection to the underground railway: "If you must have a railway the best thing you can do with it is to put it in a tube with a cork at each end." I remember, too, that when I asked what led up to his movement, he replied: "Oh, Ruskin and Carlyle, but somebody should have been beside Carlyle and punched his head every five minutes." Though I remember little, I do not doubt that, had I continued going there on Sunday evenings, I should have caught fire from his words and turned my hand to some mediaeval work or other.

Just before I had ceased to go there I had sent my *Wanderings of Usheen* to his daughter, hoping of course that it might meet his eyes, and soon after sending it I came upon him by chance in Holborn—"You write my sort of poetry," he said and began to praise me and to promise to send his praise to *The Commonwealth*, the League organ, and he would have said more had he not caught sight of a new ornamental cast-iron lamp post and got very heated upon that subject.

I did not read economics, having turned socialist because of Morris' lectures and pamphlets, and I think it unlikely that Morris himself could read economics. That old dogma of mine seemed germane to the matter. If the men and women imagined by the poets were the norm, and if Morris had, in let us say *News from Nowhere*, then running through *The Commonwealth*, described such men and women, living under their natural conditions, or as they would desire to live, then those conditions them-

selves must be the norm and could we but get rid of certain institutions the world would turn from eccentricity. Perhaps Morris himself justified himself in his own heart by as simple an argument, and was, as the socialist D—— said to me one night, walking home after some lecture, "an anarchist without knowing it." Certainly I and all about me, including D—— himself, were for chopping up the old king for Medea's pot. Morris had told us to have nothing to do with the parliamentary socialists, represented for men in general by the Fabian Society and Hyndman's Social Democratic Federation and for us in particular by D——. During the period of transition mistakes must be made, and the discredit of these mistakes must be left to "the Bourgeoisie"; and besides, when you begin to talk of this measure, or that other, you lose sight of the goal, and see, to reverse Swinburne's description of Teresias, "Light on the way but darkness on the goal." By mistakes Morris meant vexatious restrictions and compromises—"If any man puts me into a labour squad, I will lie on my back and kick." That phrase very much expresses our idea of revolutionary tactics: we all intended to lie upon our back and kick. D——, pale and sedentary, did not dislike labour squads and we all hated him with the left side of our heads, while admiring him immensely with the right side. He alone was invited to entertain Mrs Morris, having many tales of his Irish uncles, more especially of one particular uncle who had tried to commit suicide by shutting his head into a carpet-bag. At that time he was an obscure man, known only for a witty speaker at street corners and in Park demonstrations. He had, with an assumed truculence and fury, cold logic, an invariable gentleness, an unruffled courtesy, and yet could never close a speech without being denounced by a journeyman hatter, with an Italian name. Converted to socialism by D——, and to anarchism by himself, with swinging arm and uplifted voice, this man put, and perhaps, exaggerated our scruple about Parliament. "I lack," said D——, "the bump of reverence"; whereon the wild man shouted: "You 'ave a 'ole." There are moments when looking back I somewhat confuse my own figure with that of the hatter, image of our hysteria, for I too became violent with the violent solemnity of a religious devotee. I can even remember sitting behind D—— and saying some rude thing or other over his shoulder.

I don't remember why I gave it up but I did quite suddenly and

I think the push may have come from a young workman who was educating himself between Morris and Karl Marx. He had planned a history of the navy and when I had spoken of the battleships of Nelson's day, had said: "Oh, that was the decadence of the battleship," but if his naval interests were mediaeval, his ideas about religion were pure Karl Marx, and we were soon in perpetual argument. Then gradually the attitude towards religion of almost everybody but Morris, who avoided the subject altogether, got upon my nerves, for I broke out after some lecture or other with all the arrogance of raging youth. They attacked religion, I said, or some such words, and yet there must be a change of heart and only religion could make it. What was the use of talking about some new revolution putting all things right, when the change must come, if come it did, with astronomical slowness, like the cooling of the sun, or it may have been, like the drying of the moon? Morris rang his chairman's bell, but I was too angry to listen, and he had to ring it a second time before I sat down. He said that night at supper: "Of course I know there must be a change of heart, but it will not come as slowly as all that. I rang my bell because you were not being understood." He did not show any vexation, but I never returned after that night; and yet I did not always believe what I had said and only gradually gave up thinking of, and planning for, some near sudden change for the better.

XII

I spent my days at the British Museum and must, I think, have been delicate, for I remember often putting off hour after hour consulting some necessary book, because I shrank from lifting the heavy volumes of the catalogue; and yet to save money for my afternoon coffee and roll I often walked the whole way home to Bedford Park. I was compiling, for a series of shilling books, an anthology of Irish fairy stories and, for an American publisher, a two volume selection from the Irish novelists that would be somewhat dearer. I was not well paid, for each book cost me more than three months' reading; and I was paid for the first some twelve pounds ("O Mr E——," said publisher to editor, "you must never again pay so much") and for the second twenty, but I did not

think myself badly paid, for I had chosen the work for my own purposes.

Though I went to Sligo every summer, I was compelled to live out of Ireland the greater part of every year and was but keeping my mind upon what I knew must be the subject matter of my poetry. I believed that if Morris had set his stories amid the scenery of his own Wales, for I knew him to be of Welsh extraction and supposed wrongly that he had spent his childhood there, that if Shelley had nailed his Prometheus, or some equal symbol, upon some Welsh or Scottish rock, their art had entered more intimately, more microscopically, as it were, into our thought, and had given perhaps to modern poetry a breadth and stability like that of ancient poetry. The statues of Mausolus and Artemesia at the British Museum, private, half animal, half divine figures, all unlike the Grecian athletes and Egyptian kings in their near neighbourhood, that stand in the middle of the crowd's applause, or sit above measuring it out unpersuadable justice, became to me, now or later, images of an unpremeditated joyous energy, that neither I nor any other man, racked by doubt and inquiry, can achieve; and that yet, if once achieved, might seem to men and women of Connemara or of Galway their very soul. In our study of that ruined tomb raised by a queen to her dead lover, and finished by the unpaid labour of great sculptors, after her death from grief, or so runs the tale, we cannot distinguish the handiworks of Scopas and Praxiteles; and I wanted to create once more an art where the artist's handiwork would hide as under those half anonymous chisels, or as we find it in some old Scots ballads, or in some twelfth or thirteenth century Arthurian Romance. That handiwork assured, I had martyred no man for modelling his own image upon Pallas Athena's buckler; for I took great pleasure in certain allusions to the singer's life, one finds in old romances and ballads, and thought his presence there all the more poignant because we discover it half lost, like portly Chaucer, behind his own maunciple and pardoner upon the Canterbury roads. Wolfram von Eschenbach, singing his German Parsifal, broke off some description of a famished city to remember that in his own house at home the very mice lacked food, and what old ballad singer was it who claimed to have fought by day in the very battle he sang by night? So masterful indeed was that instinct that when the minstrel knew

not who his poet was, he must needs make up a man: "When any stranger asks who is the sweetest of singers, answer with one voice: 'a blind man; he dwells upon rocky Chios; his songs shall be the most beautiful for ever.'" Elaborate modern psychology sounds egotistical, I thought, when it speaks in the first person, but not those simple emotions which resemble the more, the more powerful they are, everybody's emotion, and I was soon to write many poems where an always personal emotion was woven into a general pattern of myth and symbol. When the Fenian poet says that his heart has grown cold and callous—"For thy hapless fate, dear Ireland, and sorrows of my own"—he but follows tradition and if he does not move us deeply, it is because he has no sensuous musical vocabulary that comes at need, without compelling him to sedentary toil and so driving him out from his fellows. I thought to create that sensuous, musical vocabulary, and not for myself only but that I might leave it to later Irish poets, much as a mediaeval Japanese painter left his style as an inheritance to his family, and was careful to use a traditional manner and matter; yet did something altogether different, changed by that toil, impelled by my share in Cain's curse, by all that sterile modern complication, by my "originality" as the newspapers call it. Morris set out to make a revolution that the persons of his *Well at the World's End* or his *Waters of the Wondrous Isles*, always to my mind, in the likeness of Artemesia and her man, might walk his native scenery; and I, that my native scenery might find imaginary inhabitants, half planned a new method and a new culture. My mind began drifting vaguely towards that doctrine of "the mask" which has convinced me that every passionate man (I have nothing to do with mechanist, or philanthropist, or man whose eyes have no preference) is, as it were, linked with another age, historical or imaginary, where alone he finds images that rouse his energy. Napoleon was never of his own time, as the naturalistic writers and painters bid all men be, but had some Roman emperor's image in his head and some condottiere's blood in his heart; and when he crowned that head at Rome with his own hands, he had covered, as may be seen from David's painting, his hesitation with that Emperor's old suit.

XIII

I had various women friends on whom I would call towards five o'clock mainly to discuss my thoughts that I could not bring to a man without meeting some competing thought, but partly because their tea and toast saved my pennies for the 'bus ride home; but with women apart from those intimate exchanges of thought I was timid and abashed. I was sitting on a seat in front of the British Museum feeding pigeons when a couple of girls sat near and began enticing my pigeons away laughing and whispering to one another, and I looked straight in front of me, very indignant, and presently went into the Museum without turning my head towards them. Since then I have often wondered if they were pretty or merely very young. Sometime I told myself very adventurous love stories with myself for hero and at other times I planned out a life of lonely austerity, and at other times mixed the ideals and planned a life of lonely austerity mitigated by periodical lapses. I had still the ambition, formed in Sligo in my teens, of living in imitation of Thoreau on Innisfree, a little island in Lough Gill, and when walking through Fleet Street very homesick I heard a little tinkle of water and saw a fountain in a shop window, which balanced a little ball upon its jet, and began to remember lake water. From the sudden remembrance came my poem *Innisfree*, my first lyric with anything in its rhythm of my own music. I had begun to loosen rhythm as an escape from rhetoric, and from that emotion of the crowd that rhetoric brings, but I only understood vaguely and occasionally that I must for my special purpose use nothing but the common syntax. A couple of years later I would not have written that first line with its conventional archaism—"Arise and go"—nor the inversion in the last stanza. Passing another day by the new Law Courts, a building that I admired because it was Gothic—"It is not very good," Morris had said, "but it is better than anything else they have got and so they hate it"—I grew suddenly oppressed by the great weight of stone, and thought, "There are miles and miles of stone and brick all round me," and presently added, "If John the Baptist or his like were to come again and had his mind set upon it, he could make all these people go out into some wilderness leaving their buildings empty," and that thought, which does not seem very valuable now, so en-

lightened the day that it is still vivid in the memory. I spent a few days at Oxford copying out a seventeenth century translation of Poggio's *Liber Facetiarum* or the *Hypneroto-machia* of Poliphili for a publisher; I forget which, for I copied both; and returned very pale to my enraged family. I had lived upon bread and tea because I thought that if antiquity found locust and wild honey nutritive, my soul was strong enough to need no better. I was always planning some great gesture, putting the whole world into one scale of the balance and my soul into the other and imagining that the whole world somehow kicked the beam. More than thirty years have passed and I have seen no forcible young man of letters brave the metropolis, without some like stimulant; and all after two or three, or twelve or fifteen years, according to obstinacy, have understood that we achieve, if we do achieve, in little sedentary stitches as though we were making lace. I had one unmeasured advantage from my stimulant: I could ink my socks, that they might not show through my shoes, with a most haughty mind, imagining myself, and my torn tackle, somewhere else, in some far place "under the canopy . . . i' the city of kites and crows."

In London I saw nothing good and constantly remembered that Ruskin had said to some friend of my father's—"As I go to my work at the British Museum I see the faces of the people become daily more corrupt." I convinced myself for a time, that on the same journey I saw but what he saw. Certain old women's faces filled me with horror, faces that are no longer there, or if they are pass before me unnoticed: the fat blotched faces, rising above double chins, of women who have drunk too much beer and eaten too much meat. In Dublin I had often seen old women walking with erect heads and gaunt bodies talking to themselves in loud voices, mad with drink and poverty, but they were different, they belong to romance: Da Vinci has drawn women who looked so and so carried their bodies.

XIV

I attempted to restore one old friend of my father's to the practice of his youth, but failed though he, unlike my father, had not changed his belief. My father brought me to dine with Jack

Nettleship at Wigmore Street, once inventor of imaginative designs and now a painter of melodramatic lions. At dinner I had talked a great deal—too much I imagine for so young a man, or maybe for any man—and on the way home my father, who had been plainly anxious that I should make a good impression, was very angry. He said I had talked for effect and that talking for effect was precisely what one must never do; he had always hated rhetoric and emphasis and had made me hate it; and his anger plunged me into great dejection. I called at Nettleship's studio the next day to apologize and Nettleship opened the door himself and received me with enthusiasm. He had explained to some woman guest that I would probably talk well, being an Irishman, but the reality had surpassed, *et cetera*. I was not flattered, though relieved at not having to apologize, for I soon discovered that what he really admired was my volubility for he himself was very silent. He seemed about sixty, had a bald head, a grey beard, and a nose, as one of my father's friends used to say, like an opera glass, and sipped cocoa all the afternoon and evening from an enormous tea-cup, that must have been designed for him alone, not caring how cold the cocoa grew. Years before he had been thrown from his horse, while hunting, and broke his arm and because it had been badly set suffered great pain for a long time. A little whisky would always stop the pain, and soon a little became a great deal and he found himself a drunkard, but having signed his liberty away for certain months he was completely cured. He had acquired, however, the need of some liquid which he could sip constantly. I brought him an admiration settled in early boyhood, for my father had always said, "George Wilson was our born painter but Nettleship our genius," and even had he shown me nothing I could care for, I had admired him still because my admiration was in my bones. He showed me his early designs and they, though often badly drawn, fulfilled my hopes. Something of Blake they certainly did show, but had in place of Blake's joyous intellectual energy a Saturnian passion and melancholy. God Creating Evil, the death-like head with a woman and a tiger coming from the forehead which Rossetti—or was it Browning?—had described as "the most sublime design of ancient or modern art" had been lost, but there was another version of the same thought, and other designs never published or exhibited. They rise before

me even now in meditation, especially a blind Titan-like ghost floating with groping hands above the tree-tops. I wrote a criticism and arranged for reproductions with the editor of an Art Magazine, but after it was written and accepted the proprietor, lifting what I considered an obsequious caw in the Huxley, Tyndall, Carolus Duran, Bastien-Lepage rookery, insisted upon its rejection. Nettleship did not mind its rejection, saying, "Who cares for such things now? Not ten people," but he did mind my refusal to show him what I had written. Though what I had written was all eulogy, I dreaded his judgement for it was my first art criticism. I hated his big lion pictures, where he attempted an art too much concerned with the sense of touch, with the softness or roughness, the minutely observed irregularity of surfaces, for his genius; and I think he knew it. "Rossetti used to call my pictures pot-boilers," he said, "but they are all—all," and he waved his arm to the canvasses, "symbols." When I wanted him to design gods, and angels, and lost spirits once more, he always came back to the point "Nobody would be pleased." "Everybody should have a *raison d'être*" was one of his phrases. "Mrs ——'s articles are not good but they are her *raison d'être*." I had but little knowledge of art for there was little scholarship in the Dublin art school, so I overrated the quality of anything that could be connected with my general beliefs about the world. If I had been able to give angelical or diabolical names to his lions I might have liked them also and I think that Nettleship himself would have liked them better and liking them better have become a better painter. We had the same kind of religious feeling but I could give a crude philosophical expression to mine while he could only express his in action or with brush and pencil. He often told me of certain ascetic ambitions, very much like my own, for he had kept all the moral ambition of youth, as for instance—"Yeats, the other night I was arrested by a policeman—was walking round Regent's Park barefooted to keep the flesh under—good sort of thing to do. I was carrying my boots in my hand and he thought I was a burglar and even when I explained and gave him half a crown, he would not let me go till I had promised to put on my boots before I met the next policeman."

He was very proud and shy and I could not imagine anybody asking him questions and so I was content to take these stories as they came: confirmations of what I had heard of him in boyhood.

One story in particular had stirred my imagination for, ashamed all my boyhood of my lack of physical courage, I admired what was beyond my imitation. He thought that any weakness, even a weakness of body, had the character of sin and while at breakfast with his brother, with whom he shared a room on the third floor of a corner house, he said that his nerves were out of order. Presently he left the table, and got out through the window and on to a stone ledge that ran along the wall under the windowsills. He sidled along the ledge, and turning the corner with it, got in at a different window and returned to the table. "My nerves," he said, "are better than I thought."

XV

Nettleship said to me: "Has Edwin Ellis ever said anything about the effect of drink upon my genius?" "No," I answered. "I ask," he said, "because I have always thought that Ellis has some strange medical insight." Though I had answered no, Ellis had only a few days before used these words: "Nettleship drank his genius away." Ellis, but lately returned from Perugia where he had lived many years, was another old friend of my father's but some years younger than Nettleship or my father. Nettleship had found his simplifying image, but in his painting had turned away from it, while Ellis, the son of Alexander Ellis, a once famous man of science, who was perhaps the last man in England to run the circle of the sciences without superficiality, had never found that image at all. He was a painter and poet, but his painting, which did not interest me, showed no influence but that of Leighton. He had started perhaps a couple of years too late for Pre-Raphaelite influence, for no great Pre-Raphaelite picture was painted after 1870, and left England too soon for that of the French painters. He was, however, sometimes moving as a poet and still more often an astonishment. I have known him cast something just said into a dozen lines of musical verse, without apparently ceasing to talk; but the work once done he could not or would not amend it, and my father thought he lacked all ambition. Yet he had at times nobility of rhythm—an instinct for grandeur, and after thirty years I still repeat to myself his address to Mother Earth—

"O mother of the hills forgive our towers
O mother of the clouds forgive our dreams"

and there are certain whole poems that I read from time to time or try to make others read. There is that poem where the manner is unworthy of the matter, being loose and facile, describing Adam and Eve fleeing from Paradise. Adam asks Eve what she carries so carefully and Eve replies that it is a little of the apple core kept for their children. There is that vision of Christ the Less, a too hurriedly written ballad, where the half of Christ, sacrificed to the divine half "that fled to seek felicity," wanders wailing through Golgotha; and there is *The Saint and the Youth* in which I can discover no fault at all. He loved complexities—"seven silences like candles round her face" is a line of his—and whether he wrote well or ill had always a manner which I would have known from that of any other poet. He would say to me, "I am a mathematician with the mathematics left out"—his father was a great mathematician—or "A woman once said to me, 'Mr Ellis why are your poems like sums?'" and certainly he loved symbols and abstractions. He said once, when I had asked him not to mention something or other, "Surely you have discovered by this time that I know of no means whereby I can mention a fact in conversation."

He had a passion for Blake, picked up in Pre-Raphaelite studios, and early in our acquaintance put into my hands a scrap of note paper on which he had written some years before an interpretation of the poem that begins

"The fields from Islington to Marylebone
To Primrose Hill and St John's Wood
Were builded over with pillars of gold
And there Jerusalem's pillars stood."

The four quarters of London represented Blake's four great mythological personages, the Zoas, and also the four elements. These few sentences were the foundation of all study on the philosophy of William Blake that requires an exact knowledge for its pursuit and that traces the connection between his system and that of Swedenborg or of Boehm. I recognized certain attributives,

from what is sometimes called the Christian Cabala, of which Ellis had never heard, and with this proof that his interpretation was more than fantasy, he and I began our four years' work upon the Prophetic Books of William Blake. We took it as almost a sign of Blake's personal help when we discovered that the spring of 1889, when we first joined our knowledge, was one hundred years from the publication of *The Book of Thel*, the first published of the Prophetic Books, as though it were firmly established that the dead delight in anniversaries. After months of discussion and reading we made a concordance of all Blake's mystical terms and there was much copying to be done in the Museum and at Red Hill, where the descendants of Blake's friend and patron, the landscape painter John Linnell, had many manuscripts. The Linnells were narrow in their religious ideas and doubtful of Blake's orthodoxy, whom they held, however, in great honour, and I remember a timid old lady who had known Blake when a child saying: "He had very wrong ideas, he did not believe in the historical Jesus." One old man sat always beside us, ostensibly to sharpen our pencils but perhaps really to see that we did not steal the manuscripts, and they gave us very old port at lunch, and I have upon my dining-room walls their present of Blake's Dante engravings. Going thither and returning Ellis would entertain me by philosophical discussion varied with improvised stories, at first folk-tales which he professed to have picked up in Scotland and though I had read and collected many folk tales, I did not see through the deceit. I have a partial memory of two more elaborate tales, one of an Italian conspirator flying barefoot, from I forget what adventure through I forget what Italian city, in the early morning. Fearing to be recognized by his bare feet, he slipped past the sleepy porter at an hotel calling out "number so and so" as if he were some belated guest. Then passing from bedroom door to door he tried on the boots, and just as he got a pair to fit, a voice cried from the room: "Who is that?" "Merely me, sir," he called back, "taking your boots." The other was of a martyr's Bible round which the cardinal virtues had taken personal form—this a fragment of Blake's philosophy. It was in the possession of an old clergyman when a certain jockey called upon him and the cardinal virtues, confused between jockey and clergyman, devoted themselves to the jockey. As whenever he sinned a cardinal virtue interfered and

turned him back to virtue, he lived in great credit, and made, but for one sentence, a very holy death. As his wife and family knelt round in admiration and grief he suddenly said "damn." "O my dear," said his wife, "what a dreadful expression." He answered, "I am going to heaven," and straightway died. It was a long tale for there were all the jockey's vain attempts to sin, as well as all the adventures of the clergyman, who became very sinful indeed, but it ended happily for when the jockey died the cardinal virtues returned to the clergyman. I think he would talk to any audience that offered, one audience being the same as another in his eyes, and it may have been for this reason that my father called him unambitious. When he was a young man he had befriended a reformed thief and had asked the grateful thief to take him round the thieves' quarters of London. The thief, however, hurried him away from the worst saying, "Another minute and they would have found you out. If they were not the stupidest of men in London, they had done so already." Ellis had gone through a no doubt romantic and witty account of all the houses he had robbed, and all the throats he had cut in one short life.

His conversation would often pass out of my comprehension, or indeed I think of any man's, into a labyrinth of abstraction and subtilty and then suddenly return with some verbal conceit or turn of wit. The mind is known to attain, in certain conditions of trance, a quickness so extraordinary that we are compelled at times to imagine a condition of unendurable intellectual intensity, from which we are saved by the merciful stupidity of the body; and I think that the mind of Edwin Ellis was constantly upon the edge of trance. Once we were discussing the symbolism of sex, in the philosophy of Blake, and had been in disagreement all the afternoon. I began talking with a new sense of conviction and after a moment Ellis, who was at his easel, threw down his brush and said that he had just seen the same explanation in a series of symbolic visions. "In another moment," he said, "I should have been off." We went into the open air and walked up and down to get rid of that feeling but presently we came in again and I began again my explanation, Ellis lying upon the sofa. I had been talking some time when Mrs Ellis came into the room and said: "Why are you sitting in the dark?" Ellis answered, "But we are not," and then added in a voice of wonder, "I thought the lamp was lit

and that I was sitting up and I find I am in the dark and lying down." I had seen a flicker of light over the ceiling, but had thought it a reflection from some light outside the house, which may have been the case.

To be concluded

AND IT PASSED BY THE SEA-SHORE

BY IGOR SEVERYANIN

Translated by Babette Deutsch and Avrahm Yarmolinsky

And it passed by the sea-shore, where the foam-laces flower,
Where the city barouches only rarely are seen . . .
There the queen played her Chopin in the high palace tower,
And there, listening to Chopin, the young page loved the queen.

And what passed there was simple, and what passed there was
charming:

The fair page cut the pomegranate as red as her dreams,
Then the queen gave him half thereof, with graces disarming,
She outweariad and loved him in sonata-sweet themes.

Then she gave herself stormily, till night shut her lashes.
Till the sunset the queen lay, there she slept as a slave. . . .
And it passed by the sea-shore where the turquoise wave washes,
Where sonatas are singing, and where foam frets the wave.

GERMAN LETTER

June 1921

IN the last six to eight years all the new movements in art in Germany were expressed in the one word, "expressionism." Expressionism was more a group name, a catch-word for agitation among the masses, than an artistic aim. A whole flood of books about expressionism poured down upon Germany, which has always had more art critics than artists, with the natural result that a great confusion rather than a clarification of ideas set in. The artistic aims of Germany, common in their broad outlines with the artistic aims of the other European countries, cannot be characterized by one single word. A long list of artistic forces have brought about a revolution in the realm of artistic thought.

On the surface "expressionism" is indicative of a reaction against "impressionism." Those people who have a tendency to play with catch-words and who very rarely get below the surface consequently, say: impressionism consisted of copying, of a faithful, impersonal, unspiritual reproduction of the truth; expressionism, on the contrary, is not the reproduction of the truth, not objective copying, but subjective accomplishment, expression, spiritualism. Such an opinion is a first-class collection of catch-words, is banal and platitudinous, like all generalities, and happens not to be true.

When an impressionist paints a dancer, for example, he is quite uninterested in the object, the person. He suppresses—Degas is an example—all human interest. He paints dancers as he would a peg-top, a rotating machine. He is interested only in the movement, the whirling of a white, fragrant ballet costume against the light, the harmony of rhythm and colour within the picture. Obviously, the supporter of the means of representation, of the object of nature, has vanished. He is of no more consequence as such; it is a matter of indifference whether the point of departure is a dancer, a wreath of flowers or, as Liebermann put it, a turnip. Very little remains of the things themselves, a very thin surface;

the next step is that the artist do away with this very little, this thin surface, and that he rely exclusively upon the other factors—the rhythm of colour and line and the unity of surface—shaking off completely what is really of no significance to him. The result would be the “objectless” painting of Kandinsky, the Russian, who lived in Berlin until the outbreak of the war and who has found a host of imitators, of very little consequence, in Germany.

But this esoteric flight from the world of reality is not the deciding tendency of present-day German art. On the contrary, the leaders of the new development, Kokoschka, Klee, Kirchner, Nolde, Heckel, who was killed in the war, Marc, Feininger, and Narlack and Lehmbruch, the sculptors, are opposed to impressionism as a principle of creation on account of its lack of interest and, in their own words, “its dog-like disinterestedness.” They condemn a conception which looks upon a dancer solely as a moving picture and thus becomes a mere machine for the taking of pictures, denying everything human and spiritual, all soul and ethos. The pathos in the works of such painters as Van Gogh, Munch, and Hodler, such dramatists as Hasenclever and Goehring, and such poets as Werfel or Becher, is a new union with things as they are. “We carry in our hearts the key to the world,” Wilhelm Klemm says in one of his poems. The goal of Kokoschka, beyond doubt one of the best of present-day painters, is to speak through his work to humanity of the great matters of existence, dealing exclusively with what is human and spiritual. Art, in this conception, aims at becoming the preacher of humanity, as in the spirit of Comenius.

To achieve his goal Kokoschka paints the men of his time with an unbelievable understanding, as for example in his portrait of Forel, acquired by the Kunsthalle of Mannheim. He paints great ethical poems, such as the Wandering Knight, the vision of a deluge, a consideration of death and a farewell to matter. He has painted *The Friends*, the big work that the National Gallery in Berlin owns. He shows goodness and happiness, a harmonic inner communion of thought and feeling and desire. This picture deals with the very depths of existence, with peace and great activity. He shows an endless circulation among his colours, among his masses, among his foregrounds and backgrounds, like the circulation of the blood directed from one single and central heart-beat, wandering through all the cells and then returning.

When Meidner paints an Old Testament Prophet, he is concerned not only with the picturesqueness of his subject's appearance. The fervour of faith and the absorption in God, in the morality of a superhuman world-order, are his special interests. Heckel, placing his Cowering Man down in the midst of a wide plain, swept by storms, and Nolde, translating old Biblical legends into riots of colour, from which the mellow tones of an organ seem to rise, produce faces that in some manner seem to be the product of deep human emotion. The decisive thing to be seen in these pictures is that the artist of to-day refuses to preach and to recite pretty little tales with a moral to his audience. He tries, let us say, to express all his thoughts, feelings, desires, in the rhythm of a definite experience.

To take an example that I have already used in my book, *Die Welt als Vorstellung*, let us assume that the artist desires to express something blood-thirsty, raving, murderous, breaking all bounds. He thinks of the wolf as the embodiment of these things. He could show us—and it has been done often enough—a wolf or a pack of wolves, attacking human beings, digging into their victims with razor-edged teeth, in other words, an episode that one can watch, like a performance in a menagerie. Occasionally the onlooker may, passing over his complete absorption in the physical wolf, come to a slight consideration of, say, pure wolfishness. Marc, however, painting such a picture as *The Wolf*, forces his second consideration upon those who see his work—he expresses his feeling openly and directly and comes at once to the rapacity of the animal, practically ignoring the rapacious animal as such.

When Grünewald, who has become the adored master of this young generation of artists, was called upon to paint the Resurrection at the Isenheimer altar, he paid very little attention to any actual representation of the scene as it was. He undertook a much more difficult task: that of trying to make the wonder that has happened inwardly plausible. He did not paint the tawny, frost-bitten light of dawn; he shows a powerful ball of fire emerging from the open cave, a golden yellow, a gleaming red, all in the frame of an ebbing blue-green. A ball of fire of such dazzling intensity of flame is improbable and opposed to actuality, but—an improbable ball of fire, opposed to actuality, it is that surrounds a corpse moving from grave to Heaven overnight.

Klee paints fairy tales—it should not be forgotten that fairy tales are among the very finest things that art has to offer. And just as no one, where fairy tales are concerned, stops to ask where the poet ever saw a flying carpet on which one can fly undetected into a princess's bed-chamber, it is not fair to ask the artist where he ever in actuality saw his colours or his lines.

The artist, confronted by a chair which he desires to paint, is scarcely concerned with the utility of the object, its strength, its good or poor execution—rather, he sees a few horizontals and verticals that transact and work out into space, he sees mass and unity within the mass, he sees the relation of value and strength in three dimensions. His entire attention is concentrated on putting down these curves, these masses, in the two dimensions that he has on his canvas, at the same time trying to make out of the canvas something that by nature it is not, an object of three dimensions. These varying proportions, these different strengths, the creation of space, are really the actual problems of the creator of art. Perspective was an evasion rather than a solution. In a certain sense it was anecdotal; it tells the eye through arrangement and the diminution of figures and objects that space is a factor. But perspective cannot create space, as Marc does in *The Wolf*.

Assuming such a creation as the real task of the artist, Cézanne is the model and at the same time the beginning of a new development in art. After a long time he succeeded in arriving at a complete agreement with cubism in the space of his canvas and developed a true architecture-technique. Like a mathematician developing his equations from a basic formula, he proved that all bodies, so far as their reproduction in pictures is concerned (which is the important thing in our conception) are to be approached through a system of cylinders, balls, and cones. Even the simplest understanding, which is prone to declare everything absurd that it cannot immediately understand, is sympathetic to the claim of an architect or an engineer that a building or a machine cannot be thoroughly grasped by means of a simple photograph but that an additional drawing, at the very least, is an essential. In similar fashion those artists who want to get under the appearance of things to their real composition, had to undertake experiments of the type that have been made in France by Picasso and Braque and in Germany by Feininger or Seehaus.

The experiments, as can be seen from Feininger's work, were conducted with the intention of not only arriving at a dissolution in triangles and squares but of developing functions, means of expression, that could lead to a consistent, uniform, artistic construction. Just as the stone used for building is at the same time mass material and the bearer of strength—strength for burdens and for binding—the means are being developed which shall give the architecture of artistic construction the order, unity, and inward harmony that it needs. This conquest of the spiritually accidental, this upward striving towards an artistic justice that stands above all chance and all caprice like a mathematical formula, is the spiritual embodiment towards which the new art in Germany is reaching. It is what all great art of the past—that of the Chinese, of the Indians, of the Egyptians, of the archaic Greeks, of the European Middle Ages—sought.

PAUL WESTHEIM

BOOK REVIEWS

ADAM & EVE & PINCH ME

ADAM & EVE & PINCH ME. By A. E. Coppard.
12mo. 140 pages. The Golden Cockerel Press:
Birrell and Garnett, Agents. London.

SOME of the stories are pure fantasy. Coppard begins: "In the great days that are gone I was walking the Journey upon its easy smiling roads and came one morning of windy spring to the side of a wood." He goes on to tell how he met Monk, "the fat fellow as big as two men but with the clothes of a small one squeezing the joints of him together," and how Monk walked with him on the Journey. How they met a man committing a grave crime, and a man committing a mean crime, and a man torturing a beast, and how Monk slew them all three. How they met with Mary and walked with her till they came to a great mountain in a plain and near the top of it a lake of sweet water; there Mary told them her dream and left them very lonely in the world, and Zion still far away.

Elsewhere Coppard becomes an out-and-out realist, deriving obviously—but not entirely—from Maupassant and Chekhov. He tells the story of a little boy, the son of the village atheist, who wandered into church one Saturday after evensong because the place was cozy and beautiful. He fell asleep for an hour and when he woke the doors were locked. He put on the robe of a chorister; he ate the communion bread because he was hungry and drank great draughts of the communion wine. He uttered a rigmarole of prayer (Thirty days hath September; April, June, and November) and fell asleep on the soft carpet within the altar rail.

Evidently he is not, even here, utterly two-by-four; there is always a fourth dimension of poetry. That is the charm of his method. He is at his best when his stories, instead of marching off to an immediate blare of ghostly trumpets, begin with a matter-of-fact narration and slip quite insensibly over the borders of ex-

perience. The title story is like that; its hero comes back from a brilliant afternoon among the trees and dykes of his own fields to find that he has stepped unwittingly out of his body. Dusky Ruth, another tale, begins with a bald and exact description of an inn parlour in the Cotswolds; one reads on listlessly to find that the whole atmosphere has become suddenly charged with violent emotion. Coppard writes well enough to carry off these *tours de force*; his technique consorts well with his chosen subjects.

He uses both landscapes and people in obtaining his effects, and he uses them both in the same way. They are the materials with which he builds; he shapes them skilfully and dispassionately. Dusky Ruth, he says, "wore a light blouse of silk, a short skirt of black velvet, and a pair of very thin silk stockings that showed the flesh of instep and shin so plainly that he could see they were reddened by the warmth of the fire. She had on a pair of dainty cloth shoes with high heels, but what was wonderful about her was the heap of rich black hair piled at the back of her head and shadowing the dusky neck." This description is handled carefully, but with no more humanity than his description of the landscape of the Cotswolds, where "An odd lark or black bird, the ruckle of partridges, or the nifty gallop of a hare had been almost the only mitigation of the living loneliness that was almost as profound by day as by night." The prose here is closely related to that of the early Restoration, when the rolling grandeur of seventeenth century English was tempered with the sharpness and lucidity of the eighteenth. Again he has chosen a medium which falls in happily with the effects for which he is seeking.

The unity of his stories is emotional; it does not depend on time or space. The first few pages are spent in creating an emotion; the last in maintaining it; when the emotion dies, the story comes to an end, without much reference to plot or character. The result is sometimes an air of perverse incompleteness, and the psychoanalysts, to explain it, will refer hastily to their texts. To no avail, for Coppard's workmanship is not subconscious. The apparent difficulty is explained by the fact that his handling of a plot depends on aesthetic judgements and not on journalism or its recent ally, psychology.

The beauty which he attains (I use the word in its technical sense) is satisfyingly restrained; unlike his romantic forebears he

has made the necessary compromise with the imperfections of the actual. In one story he tells how two gipsies found the body of a dead naked woman in the wood, "gone a bit dull like pearls look, but the fine build of that lady was the world's wonder." There was not a scratch or the sign of death on her anywhere, except for a little bird's dropping on her stomach. It is a weird and successful tale, and very modern in its treatment. If Madame Bovary had found that body sixty years ago, she would either have disregarded the one unpleasant detail, or else she would have allowed it to poison the experience. Coppard, on the other hand, makes a whole story turn on it. Madame Bovary, if she became an authoress, would never have staged a love scene, as that of Dusky Ruth was staged, in front of the four black handles of the beer engine. The only point of this discussion is the fact that two romantic generations resembled Emma Bovary much more than they resembled her creator; evidently Coppard has avoided their chiefest weakness.

In the same way he has avoided the *Bovarisme* of the present generation, which depends on neurosis rather than on a false romance. If Emma were a contemporary of ours, she would dissolve her vapours by attending fashionable psychiatrists, and would return home to write poems in free verse beginning "I am tired of . . ." or "I hate people who . . ." It is to her modern prototypes that we are indebted for the novel of nerves and for the development of the cult of the disagreeable. Coppard is not healthier, perhaps, but he is saner; he has nerves, but he does not allow them to be rasped continually.

In fact, he makes a habit out of not falling into pitfalls. He works in dangerous mediums; at any moment he might stumble into the bog of the Freudian novel or, on the other side, into the quicksands of Maeterlinck, but he keeps his feet on the firm way. To attain this surety he must either struggle a long time with his stories or else he tears up most of them. He is a careful workman and a sure workman, and a pleasant reminder that the short story, unlike the autobiographic novel, is not yet a dead form.

MALCOLM COWLEY

QUEEN VICTORIA

QUEEN VICTORIA. *By Lytton Strachey. Illustrated.*
8vo. 424 pages. Harcourt, Brace and Company. \$5.

WHEN Mr Lytton Strachey published his *Eminent Victorians*, great was the scandal, and loud the outcry of relatives and survivors. There were others, however, who found it refreshing to see the most respected Mammoths of the Victorian age—that age of Mammoths—made into figures of solemn fun, and to witness the dismay of those who still honoured the bones of these revered monsters. Some judicious observers, however, while they remained untroubled by the scandal, yet qualified their admiration of this brilliant book by slightly different considerations. That imposing reputations should be called into question, that a free, cool, ironic light of criticism should be turned upon those great Victorian figures, exposing their warts and strange excrescences, was, they felt, a gain to good sense and any true estimate of human achievements. But they also felt—or, at least, to be quite accurate, they felt they ought to feel—that Mr Strachey had turned his great gifts to not quite the most serious uses. Immense intelligence, wide knowledge, a profound grasp of the large outlines and events of history, and an incomparable mastery of the art of presenting character, surely gifts like these, they felt—or, as I say, they tried to feel—should be devoted to serious history; and they hoped, or felt they ought to hope, that in his future work he would apply his powers to some true, objective, unburlesqued presentation of important characters and events.

This hope seems to have been amply fulfilled by his life of *Queen Victoria*, which has been received with such unanimous applause. Here was a figure capable of caricature, if there ever was one, but Mr Strachey has all the appearance of treating his subject with seriousness, almost with reverence and affection. Only now and then, in a phrase or two, is the burlesque touch perceptible; and he seems deliberately to avoid opportunities for ironic comment. What pages he might have written, had he

wished, on Queen Victoria as the head of the established Church! But this aspect of her reign, and some others like it, are never so much as mentioned.

But the life of Queen Victoria, as he sees and presents it, is a theme of such interest that it needs no adventitious aids to hold our enthralled attention. History, and the imaginations of men, are full of kings and queens; we study their lives; their acts and doings are impressed upon all our memories. But how little, after all, we know about them, what they are really like, how their circumstances affect their consciousness, and what the world looks like from the incredible position in which chance has placed them. Mr Strachey has elaborated, has, indeed, almost invented, an art of worming himself into the consciousness of the personages he deigns to study; by a subtle selection of their utterances, by sifting their letters and journals, he seizes on their most intimate self-betrays; and by giving these without comment, he attains a vividness of portraiture which is a new and most valuable innovation in the art of writing history. In Queen Victoria, who was continually pouring herself out in her letters and journals, he found a subject ideally suited for his method. The tap was always turned on; and if the source was not a very mysterious one, the stream flowed through so strange a landscape that no reflection on its surface could be without importance. Indeed, the very crystalline simplicity and obviousness of Queen Victoria's character lend a special interest to her life. In herself she was a good, homely, conscientious, rather hard and unsubtle woman of limited intelligence, full of vitality and strong prosaic principles and feelings, conscientious, capable, and sincere, who passed without a touch of irony or imagination through all the complicated yet stereotyped metamorphoses common to persons of her sex and type. A fat, healthy baby, a carefully educated child, a wilful young girl, fond of fun and dancing, a happy bride, thoroughly in love with her handsome husband, a bustling matron, and the mother of an enormous family, and then a disconsolate widow, draped in the deepest mourning, she became at last an indulgent grandmother, an honoured, revered, opulent, self-willed old lady. All this is normal enough, and even a little commonplace, but what is not at all commonplace, what lends the amazing and unique interest to her life, is the strange position in which she found herself,

and the way she was affected by her unprecedented circumstances. In the common sense structure of the British Constitution, there remained a shrine, a withdrawn and holy place, full of awe and mystery, with a pedestal and throne in its most sacred recesses, and on that throne and pedestal this good lady was plumped down by her countrymen and endowed with strange functions, mystical attributes, and vague, immemorial, almost sacred powers. She was the heir of monarchs, the heir, indeed, of a tradition of monarchy inherited from before the dawn of history, handed down from those gods or wizard kings who were supposed to control the seasons by their magic, to make rain or sunshine, and maintain the universe in its proper balance. If, in the transformation of time, the monarchy had lost some of its magical attributes, it had come to acquire other powers of hardly less talismanic significance, and was expected to satisfy new, but equally mystical, demands. The monarch was no longer a holy wizard, but something quite as holy, a great, solemn figurehead or image, a concrete yet ideal symbol of the national unity and greatness. These were the strange attributes imposed by the nation upon this good lady, and expounded to her by its political thinkers in metaphysical terms that it was hopeless to expect her to understand. Hazlitt somewhere describes his first sight of royalty, his astonishment at seeing in the person of one of the Queen's uncles a metaphysical and political abstraction actually coming out of the door with a ruddy face and a frock coat. We share his astonishment as we see, emerging from Mr Strachey's pages, the homely, concrete, and yet still more metaphysical figure of the royal niece. It is this contrast between the ordinary and the extraordinary, between platitude and splendour, between the little old lady and the immemorable panoply of kings, which makes Queen Victoria's situation so arresting; the interest of her life is not in herself, but in the conflict and blending of private and public life, of character and circumstance. Here was a perfect specimen of English commonplace and respectability, who was doomed, for mystical reasons, to be hedged in by etiquette and splendid ceremony, and to spend her life in the laborious performance of strange rites and observances, of which the necessity was an open question, and the meaning not exactly clear to any one, least of all to the crowned and sceptred performer. The position of undefined power and punctilious representation was a

source, to Queen Victoria in her girlhood and before her marriage, of unmingled pleasure; but when she became immersed in her domestic life, and had her husband and home and great family of children to look after, her public duties became extremely irksome to her. Her human functions absorbed her, and her public functions she delegated as much as she could to her husband. And when that husband died, she devoted herself so entirely to her widow's grief, and so completely neglected her symbolic duties, that she incurred much of that public disapprobation which in more primitive times brought to an unhappy end those wizard kings who neglected to maintain the seasons and the prosperity of their tribe.

As, however, the years went on, the Queen's private and public functions became gradually harmonized and fused together. Her character did not alter, her limitations, her simple outlook on the world, and the emphatic platitude of her thought and vocabulary remained unchanged, but she applied her qualities of mind and will, her vehemence, her prosaic sincerity to the duties of her public position; while that position, growing in prestige and importance as the years went by, endowed the private person, the little old lady in her widow's cap, with a royal dignity and grandeur of deportment, strangely in contrast with her make-up and appearance, and all the more awful and overwhelming for that very contrast. Even Mr Strachey seems to stand in awe of the portentous ghost he has called up; he seems to bow before her with the deferential perturbation of her ministers and subjects. Queen Victoria had resolved in her youth that she would be good; that resolve she kept throughout her life with inflexible determination; is it possible that, awestruck by her august example, Mr Strachey has made for himself a similar resolution? Or, perhaps, one wonders, is this decorous book only another piece of Mr Strachey's fun? Could Mr Strachey be good as Queen Victoria was good, and is he as much impressed by her as the right thinking public seems to believe? Is he an iconoclast no longer; has he laid aside his bright, destructive weapons of irony and wit? Has he renounced his exquisite sense of human absurdity, and decided that it is not for him to portray in cosmic history the grotesqueness of men's actions and beliefs upon this planet? Or perhaps it has occurred to him that an uncommented portrayal of this great national figurehead

and fetish, an unvarnished record, set down in her own words, of what this quaint old lady thought and felt, as she sat so solidly, and yet so mysteriously, on the apex of the British Empire, might make a book of ironic significance more full of what the French call *malice* than any chapters in the *Eminent Victorians*? Mr Strachey is a very subtle person; it is not safe to trust him too far.

LOGAN PEARSALL SMITH

MR ROGER FRY AND THE ARTISTIC VISION

VISION AND DESIGN. By Roger Fry. 4to. 204 pages.
Brentano. \$7.50.

MR ROGER FRY possesses the vision of the artist. He has brought together the selected writings of twenty years, essays which leave no phase of the problem untouched, from the dramatic genius of Giotto to the dreams of Socialism; and in no instance has he been dominated by the extraneous issue of subject-matter. An insatiable search for truth has kept his pictorial vision undefiled, and has produced a book singularly free from literary generalizations and from clever theories developed at the expense of facts. He is the first Englishman to write purely from the artist's point of view: his compeer, Mr Clive Bell, once attempted it, but a debauch of Plato led him astray; and Mr George Moore was all Manet and sentiment. Investigating again and again the interdependence of form and meaning, Mr Fry comes close to fundamental art values, and saves himself from the error common to so many modern critics who would have us accept the analysis of a detail as the explanation of a complex whole. Art is neither colour nor line, neither tone nor volume, neither mass nor spirit—it is an intricate combination of all of these; it is not poetry regarded as an expression of a mood, nor is it "significant form" regarded as a plastic manifestation—it is a statement of the immanent relation of spiritual states and phenomena in which poetry and plasticity are but the accompaniments of the process of externalization.

The painter has waited a long time for a book of this character: those ideas which he has felt to be true but which he has been unable to put into words are here set forth with remarkable lucidity and precision; and for the layman beginning to take a serious interest in the beautiful the essays will be of inestimable service—the author's erudition is never intrusive; he writes of the new art with convincing animation and discusses the old in a language that is neither stale nor pretentious; his technical passages are always intelligible and he avoids propaganda for any school or move-

ment. He shows that every picture worth a moment's consideration is built upon design, and with this truth in mind his argument drives straight to the unanswerable conclusion, namely, that the meaning of art lies in its forms. His insistence on this point is developed in one aspect or another in each of the twenty-five chapters; and the diversity of his method is more satisfactory to the average student than one solemn dissection carried out at great length. For the specialist a few premises can be made to summarize the entire field of research, but the general reader, who has not the artist's interest in the subject, requires many examples and variations in order to apprehend the validity of a liberal aesthetic. Mr Fry's versatility is therefore most excellent: it binds the professor and the metaphysician to the basal objectivity which must attend good theory, and it prevents the naïve art-lover from becoming involved in illustrative and ethical content.

Mr Fry does not ally himself with the "purity" cult of the abstractionists. At times he leans toward this fallacious growth, probably because of his enthusiasm for the younger moderns, but in his retrospective remarks he frankly admits that art cannot be completely separated from representation of some sort. But he is not quite at ease in the matter and fails to distinguish between representation and meaning. Abstract form is an artistic contradiction: form is infallibly objective and the material selected by the painter for pictorial treatment is clothed with inherited and habitual associations. It is the business of the artist to create a structure in which the original attributes are given a new meaning; and it is the business of the critic to point out that a work of art is achieved when representation is submerged; when the new meaning is made profound and moving by formal order.

An art of naked plasticity, a perfectly abstract system of relationships, would be conceptually possible only in a brain limited to visual impressions. When perceptions of depth, measurements of tri-dimensional space, and ideas of superposition enter the mind, ideal combinations of mass, colour, and line are invested with an emotional significance and become subjected to degrees of value. Such impressions have been modified by ages of practical activity; they are intimately connected with the routine life of man; they are sharp and specific and complex, and when reduced to graphic form carry with them a power far beyond the geometry of lines

and colours, which are merely their symbols. Only an intellect highly developed, endowed with the ability to organize, and nourished solely by retinal sensations could abolish every suggestion of objectivity and produce an unadulterated art. Unfortunately man has not arrived at the scientific perfection of the Utopian organism; his psychological apparatus is still more or less human, and for the present the purists will have to learn that all form bears a meaning beyond the mechanics of volume and energy.

Mr Fry's nervousness over this absorbing problem is counterbalanced by his refreshing honesty. His affection for art is never superseded by the impressive paragraph; he has long been England's most ardent champion of new and living work and for this reason he hesitates to make what so many might, at this time, call a reactionary step. He would not break faith with the Post-Impressionists, and yet he confesses that he cannot segregate the "purely aesthetic emotion"; his insight into the great design of the old masters is astonishingly fine, and yet, through the influence of the French negromaniacs, he attaches far too much importance to the work of the Bushmen, the Mayas, and the Africans. In his essay on *Negro Sculpture* he over-emphasizes the value of plasticity as such. That a carving is sculpturally free, that it is conceived palpably in three dimensions, that its tactility is absolute, is of secondary moment. These facts have little or nothing to do with the fundamental qualities of design and have no relation in their own right to the essentials of rhythm. As a matter of truth the perfect freedom of negro sculpture is destructive rather than helpful to a co-ordination of parts. Our perception of rhythm in the visual arts depends on sensations recorded by the retina and thence transmitted to the brain where an elaborate context of motor and tactual feelings is added. A plane is a linear measurement of a section of the field of vision—it merges into a block-form by means of resurgent motor and tactual experiences which accompany it habitually. Planes become aesthetically significant when their relations are apparent, when their interdependence is not only known, but actually seen. Emotionally ordered planes are those which present clear transitions from one prominence of a mass to another; and the natural evolution of rhythmical sculpture must, therefore, follow the laws of frontality, progressing from the bas-relief through a more and more compli-

cated sequence of planes into the full-round. There is no other way to attain perfect freedom without the sacrifice of optical satisfaction. In the case of negro sculpture we are committed to pure tactility, a blind man's art, which is redeemed for the vision by a number of decorative accessories.

To one who has put up with the clock-ornaments and tombstones of the official British sculptors, these archaic things must really seem great works of art; but in comparison with the monuments of the Renaissance, the Chinese, and the modern French, they are no more than symmetrical *homunculi* with the surface polish of old violins. Literature, also, has its negromaniacs, its Tahitian nostalgia; and the movement in both arts is decadent—the evasion of defeated souls who cannot face the complexities of modern life, and who sail away to the far South, to the isles of indolence.

In his treatise on aesthetics, the author analyses the teleology of the artist's activity and draws many clean distinctions between verisimilitude and art. His writing here is admirable—it rings with wisdom and edifies by example; but we wish that more space had been devoted to emotion as it relates to natural form and to the painter's reconstruction of the external world. In considering the artist's purpose as the desire to arouse specific emotional states, Mr Fry runs slightly into that popular symbolism which interprets form as an instrument to convey content. The "artist's attitude toward natural form" is not so much "various according to the emotions he wishes to arouse" as various according to the intensity of the effect of the form upon himself. The real teleology of art begins with the processes of construction and is totally dissociated from predetermination, a fact known to every artist who is able to look critically into himself. The yellow of a tulip and the bluish green of its leaves may set into action a chain of pleasant emotions; the colours may call up the desire to communicate to others some particularity of the engendered feelings, but this mental flurry is altogether different from the abstracted notation which begins to grow on the canvas, which has its own values and its own emotivity, and which, on completion, may call up, not tulips but eternities. In his essay explaining the artist's vision, Mr Fry's symbolistic tendency is not so apparent. Himself a painter, he is familiar with the struggles of the creative mind, and

the genesis of a picture is outlined with the acumen and confidence of one who has painted with his brain as well as with his hand. The simplification of nature, individual preferences for certain types of form, and the dissimilarity between the vision of the artist and the glances of the unseeing layman are brought to the reader's attention in a thoroughly satisfactory manner.

The highest point of the book is to be found in the chapter on Art and Science. Referring to the affinities of the two departments of thought, the author says:

"Both of these aspects—the particularising and the generalising—have their counterparts in art. Curiosity impels the artist to the consideration of every possible form in nature: under its stimulus he tends to accept each form in all its particularity as a given unalterable fact. The other kind of intellectual activity impels the artist to attempt the reduction of all forms, as it were, to some common denominator which will make them comparable with one another. It impels him to discover some aesthetically intelligible principle in various forms and even to envisage the possibility of some kind of abstract form in the aesthetic contemplation of which the mind would attain satisfaction—a satisfaction curiously parallel to that which the mind gets from the intellectual recognition of abstract truth."

And when he connects the aesthetic emotion with "the apprehension of relations" he makes a signal advance towards the aesthetics of the future, a vast scheme of scientific reasoning which will recognize the omniprevalence of the relativity of the facts of life, and which will demonstrate the artist's genius for co-ordination. The kinship of art and science might have been developed at greater length: the article as a whole leaves the impression that only the obvious characteristics of the two fields lend themselves to comparison and fails to go into the important question of the relation of their totals. The author also forgets to advise us of the kind of science he has in mind—whether it is science in the philosophical or natural sense. All the same the essay contains impregnable truth.

Mr Fry is fortunate in having his opinions published in so handsome a volume. The illustrations alone are enough to convince

us that he knows his business; and by placing on the same page examples of the old art and the new, he has shown that modernism is a continuation of the design of the past. His utterances are devoid of bigotry and journalistic cleverness; he has no sympathy with illustrators and pseudo-artists who pander to the plutocrats; and he has profound interest in the destination of pictures. *Vision and Design* is one of the few books written on art in the last decade that are worth reading.

THOMAS JEWELL CRAVEN

THE MYTHOLOGY OF ALL RACES

THE MYTHOLOGY OF ALL RACES. Vol. XII. EGYPTIAN. By *W. Max Müller*. INDO-CHINESE. By *Sir James George Scott*. 8vo. 450 pages. Vol. III. CELTIC. By *John Arnott Macculloch*. SLAVIC. By *Jan Máchal*. 8vo. 398 pages. Vol. XI. LATIN-AMERICAN. By *Hartley Burr Alexander*. 8vo. 424 pages. *Marshall Jones Company*. Each volume, \$6.

THERE is something fascinating about the study of extinct mythologies. Their obscurities are intriguing. If one is an impressionist, he may take pleasure in the savour of their particularities, he may sample the beetle-god Khepri of Egypt, the three-headed god of the Gauls, the American Indian Thunderbird, with the same delight in the uniquenesses of experience with which the poet treasures his variegated bits of sunlight and rain and wind. Or the mythologist may be a student, he may discover in the jungle of fancies called mythology certain trails that seem to head for a realm of ultimates, a generalized folk-psychology. Or, more modestly, he may be satisfied with glimpses of the weary road the human mind and heart have travelled down the ages. All the same, the honest student will not too carefully keep to the trails; he will have an eye and an ear for the passing nymphs and prowling monsters of the woods. He will, honest childlike soul that he should be, chase many a wild goose, prepared, if halted by the overseer of the jungle, to produce his psychological and culture-historical passports. For an absurd tale of glamorous other-worlds is as a haunting tune and the patina of the ages is as the red of old wine. And if there are ears that are deaf to these tunes, throats that are not friendly to this wine, their possessors should keep off and walk up and down the ruled avenues of that other mythological domain called science.

Mythology, like religion and social organization and art and language, like all of human culture, poses many more problems than are ever solved or ever likely to be solved. No easy interpretative formula takes us safely through its mazes, it is not a

puzzle which can be read cold and true by the help of a cipher code. In their day the euhemerists reduced the vagaries of mythology to sober historical fact, distorted by the exaggerative fancy of the folk. Echoes of this interpretative principle are still heard; it can even be shown to have some validity. As a major interpretative principle it is inadequate. At a later day Max Müller, the Oxford Sanskritist and comparative philologist, wrote an interesting essay introducing what may be termed a linguistic theory of mythology. His scholarly reputation and brilliant style gave his theory a vogue that it hardly merited on intrinsic grounds. His attempts to explain mythological incidents as folk misunderstandings of archaic and metaphorical modes of expression have been definitely abandoned. Yet even this theory of Max Müller's of mythology as a "disease of language" has a limited validity. Mixed up with it was another theory which in its present form may be described as an attempt to understand mythology as a philosophy of nature, particularly of nature in its more grandiose and cosmic aspects. Primitive man was supposed to be eternally concerned with sun and moon and stars, to be perennially puzzled by the cycle of the seasons. He constructed myths to account for these majestically encompassing phenomena and, in the course of time, these myths degenerated into unintelligible god-tales and hero-tales. Even now one reads much of sun-myths, occasionally of dawn-maidens. It is undeniably true that there is more than a sprinkling of validity in this theory of mythology, so far from unpopular, but its ridiculous abuse has tended to put it into disfavour with the general run of anthropologists. On the whole, anthropologists fight shy, and with reason, of all interpretations of mythology as an "explanation" of anything; it is not difficult to prove that explanatory features in mythology are frequently secondary accretions. To-day the psychoanalysts are trying to storm the defences of the anthropologists with their formidable array of psycho-sexual symbolisms. Myths are transformations of the Libido. Unfortunately, psychoanalysts are notably lacking in the historical sense; the historical sense is something that anthropologists, having but lately acquired it, are very proud of; hence to the anthropologists the psychoanalysts are as fools who rush in where angels fear to tread. Can we expect of the anthropologists that they bow to idols carven

in the cruder likeness of images they have themselves so recently destroyed?

Few anthropologists and culture-historians of to-day would be satisfied with any one formula of cultural interpretation. Mythology, like every other domain of culture-history, is recognized as a historical growth of incredible complexity. It is rooted in the psychology of the folk, concerning which we know little, but once a mythological feature has taken form, it is subject to many historical influences, to many unforeseeable and uncontrollable "accidents," whether of local development, degeneration, reinterpretation, diffusion, or fertilization with foreign ideas. Any attempt to apply a set of psychological principles or any other one-sided set of interpretative principles leads to artificialities of conception, perhaps to intellectual disaster. Mythology, in other words, represents a complicated detritus of cultural processes, not a consistent folk development easily formulated in simple principles. Such an attitude is disappointing to conceptualists. Conceptualists are always unhappy when confronted by the concrete processes of history, that most precious anthology of "accidents."

These remarks have been prompted by the appearance of three further volumes of a series which, with all its unevennesses of merit, forms a valuable guide to both student and general reader. Of the five monographs, Müller's is easily the most scholarly and authoritative. It is the work of perhaps our foremost American Egyptologist, recently deceased, and shows an admirable control of the difficult documentary material.

The most remarkable characteristic of the mythology of Egypt, certainly the feature that most excited the mingled wonder and amusement of the classical world, was the frequent identification of the gods with animals. In close connection with this was the belief in sacred animals, embracing either whole species, like the ibis, or particular animals worshipped within the temple precincts. More extensive ethnological knowledge has reconciled us to the notion of the divinity or supernatural power inhering in the animal world. The animal gods of Egypt, while still constituting a specialized theological development, need no longer affect us as bizarre creations of the human fantasy. The most peculiar feature of Egyptian animal-god worship would seem to be the plastic method of their representation. It is a moot point whether

the representation of the animal gods as animal-headed human beings reflected a psychological attitude or was in origin merely a stylistic device that in turn reacted on the Egyptian conception of divinity. Similar questions present themselves in the mythology of the West Coast Indians.

The case of Egypt shows clearly that a very considerable advance in material civilization may be coupled with a relatively low type of religion. In this respect Egypt offers a strange and instructive contrast to Judea. The material civilization of Judea must always have seemed a crude affair to the Egyptians, yet its inhabitants early developed a type of religious thinking that was infinitely neater than the best that Egypt could offer in its latest and most philosophical period. It is worth remarking on this incongruity as an example of an historical truth that is generally overlooked. The advance of culture is by no means of like rapidity, nor is a culture at a given time of like profundity in all of its aspects.

The monograph on Indo-Chinese mythology is a right readable but superficial and amateurish treatment of an unusually complex problem. The scientific study of Indo-Chinese mythology, that is, of the mythologies of Burma, Siam, Cochin-China, and Annam, demands a wide range of specialist knowledge and the careful segregation of the mythological material into the older strata and the borrowed influences from India and China. Of a full grasp of these problems there is little indication in Sir James' book.

Of a much higher order of scholarship is Macculloch's *Celtic Mythology*. It is regrettable that a certain dryness of treatment and a not altogether natural division of the subject matter make the reading of this book more of a task than it might have been expected to be. It is difficult to get a connected idea of the whole of Celtic mythology. The continental Gallic evidence, the Irish documents, and the Brythonic records hardly make up a unified picture. The Gallic evidence is too remote in time to link up easily with the later insular records. On the other hand, the abundant Irish and Welsh literary sources fail to give the old mythological beliefs and legends in their pristine form. The destructive influence of Christianity had set in early; in these sources the older gods generally appear in degraded form as heroes and demons. The general spirit of Celtic mythology is pervaded by a romantic and childlike extravagance of fancy. The supernaturalism of this mythology has little of the august and austere; it

seems rather to revel in the heaping up of exaggerated details, that are beautiful only at times. The great figures of Celtic mythology have not the gracious quality of the gods and heroes of classical antiquity, at least as seen through the medium of a humanizing literary translation.

The writer of the Slavic section has made the most of a scanty theme. With Slavic mythology we have no great body of native literature to serve as a guide, but are thrown almost entirely on the resources of modern folk-lore and folk-practices and on the brief and incidental accounts preserved in the writings of German and Arabic mediaeval travellers. The author takes up first the different types of *genii*, which occupy a remarkably prominent place in Slavic folk-belief, proceeds to the extinct deities of the Elbe-Slavs and the pagan Russians, and concludes with a summary of Slavic cults and modern festivals containing pagan survivals.

The Latin-American volume is far more than a mere compilation from all the available sources. It is, so far as I know, the first serious attempt that has been made to give a connected account of the native American mythologies from Mexico and the Antilles clear south to Tierra del Fuego. This vast region includes the most civilized aboriginal peoples of the continent, the ancient Mayas and Peruvians, and tribes that are reckoned among the most primitive we know, such as the Fuegians and the woodland tribes of Brazil. The material is therefore not all of a piece. Further, our information is exceedingly scanty for large portions of the region. Where it is abundant, or relatively so, it comes to us only partly as direct native testimony; the bulk of it is a Hispanicized rehash. Even for this we have every reason to be thankful, for the *padres* that followed in the wake of Cortez and Pizarro were more interested in catechisms and in bonfires of heathen codices than in punctilious accuracy concerning the absurd gods, tales, and rites of the Devil's American children. Professor Alexander has done well not to confine his treatment to mythology proper, but to take in the adjacent fields of religion and ceremonialism as well. The manner of the treatment is business-like and descriptive, little attempt being made to interpret the myths psychologically or historically. This is perhaps as it should be for the present. We are still not far removed from the brick-gathering stage in the study of primitive religion and myth. Edifices up to date are flimsy.

ZUNI FOLK TALES

ZUNI FOLK TALES. *By Frank Hamilton Cushing.*
8vo. 474 pages. G. P. Putnam's Sons.

OUTLINES OF THE ZUNI CREATION MYTH. *By Frank Hamilton Cushing. Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology.*

WHEN D. H. Lawrence in a letter addressed to American artists urged upon them as their particular task the completion of the life pattern interrupted in the New World by European conquest, and the search for native sources of inspiration in the poetry and drama and design of Amerind art, he said nothing that had not already been expressed in one fashion or another by Western artists. Few of them have failed to experience the necessity of nourishing their own product through the top-soil of human experience laid next to the earth by the earliest Americans. They have seen it as inevitable that the sagas of that less sophisticated culture should take the place in our own literature occupied in the literature of Europe by the songs of Irish kings and Scandinavian skalds.

It has been long known that every one of the more advanced Amerind tribes had its epic of tribal history, stated in verse that approached and at times equalled the great tribal epics of Europe. It is one of the shames of our own culture that so many of these have been permitted to perish utterly or decay under the complacencies of missionary effort. Two or three of them are still locked behind difficult tongues and prejudices we have taken no pains to remove, but in 1889 it was arranged that Frank Hamilton Cushing, whose qualifications for the work amounted to genius, should make an attempt to secure the text of the Zuni epic. There was but one way in which it could be accomplished. This was for Cushing to be adopted into the tribe of the Ashwini, assuming its dress and its speech, and work his way through the varying degrees of its tribal mysteries to such priestly eminence as would permit him to hear and learn the sacred tribal chronicle of the New Made, the adven-

tures of the Beloved Twain, and the issuance of the people of Zuni from the four womb-worlds. All this Cushing did with such thoroughness that he never came quite back into the modern American world. Always his written word, and especially when he wrote of the Zuni, carried the rhythms of its speech, the long gurgling runs as of water in the *acqueia* finding its way to the roots of the seven coloured corn.

Zuni in north-western New Mexico, is that one of the Pueblo groups first sighted by the Spanish explorers in 1540 (by Fray Marcos a year before that, from a hilltop) and, as the Seven Cities of Cibola, figured as the objective of Coronado's expedition. By Cushing's time it was reduced to one considerable town, with three farm settlements, lying in the high valley under Taaiyalone, the sacred Corn Mountain. Of all that Cushing found time to set down about it, for his study was interrupted by ill health and never resumed during his life, two works have literary significance: Zuni Folk Tales and Outlines of the Zuni Creation Myth.

His Tales must be ranged with the work of the Grimm Brothers as a collection of folk-tales, but immensely more provocative, as being indigenous, unworked. All European folk-tales are coloured by removal from their homeland, by the changing environment of use and culture through which they have reached us. The Zuni tales flowered on their own roots in their native soil.

It is interesting to note that they are, in respect to the patterns of human experience which they reproduce, the same tales that have come to us by way of ancient Greece and Rome; the trial of lovers; the boy brought up among his brothers of the wild, himself the son of a maiden and the god who came to her through the roof-hole as the summer rain; the Maiden of the Yellow Rocks who tests her lovers through her magic powers; the man who undertakes to bring his wife back from the Underworld on condition that he does not kiss her; and the Turkey Girl, the Cinderella of the terraced houses. Told in this naïve relation to their environment, the magic elements, always so much of an item in folk-tales, lose their mechanical character; they are perceived to be the normal way of accounting for experience in a world where much that happens is, and must remain, mysterious from man's point of view. The Amerind tale-maker sees his world as honestly as any young novelist writing from Main Street or Spoon River or West Twenty-third

Street. He sees man a lonely adventurer into the playground of powers vast and inexplicable, but for the most part friendly, and to be utilized by the courageous to man's advantage. What chiefly impresses me on re-reading the Zuni tales after an interval of several years, is the absence of that element of wish fulfilment which the psychologists of to-day have read backward into Old-World fairy-lore. The item of aesthetic entertainment is there, an excellent enjoyment of the turn of character, as particularly witnessed in the retold tale of the Cock and the Mouse. But conspicuously what the stories attempt to do is to relate what the Amerind believed happened to man attempting to come into harmonious relations with his environment. A great deal happens which, though clearly recognized as happening, has to be dismissed as magic, or to borrow a word from another tribe, *orenda*, the subtle interplay of invisible powers.

It begins to seem to me on closing the volume again, that it is not the Amerind tales that are childish, but those American tales which insist on depicting a world in which nothing is mysterious or unexplained, and nothing happens which is not immediately obvious.

It is not however for the light it throws on the aboriginal literary process alone that the Cushing collection is valuable, but for the careful rendering of style, of rhythms shaped by long association with the American scene, in a locale where it reaches its most dramatic expression. "After all," says the Turkey chief, in the Pueblo version of the Cinderella motive, "the gods dispose of men according as men are fitted, and if the poor be poor in heart and spirit as well as in appearance, how will they be aught but poor to the end of their days." And again when Palowahtiwa is protesting that his "word pouch is as empty as the food pouch of a lost hunter" and he is adjured to "feel in the bottom of it and tell of the Underworld," one smacks the native flavour. There is a Homeric reality about the Beloved Twain before whom enemies fall "like bees in a rainstorm," who swear "by the chut of an arrow" or "by the delight of death"; reality even among the Unborn Men of the Underworld of whom Palowhatiwa explains that "whereas the dead are like the wind taking form from within, of their own wills, these men are like smoke taking form from without of the outward touchings of things."

Superior in literary interest, superior in content to the Arthurian legends and comparable to the Siegfried cycle from which the Wagnerian Operas were drawn, is Cushing's Outlines of the Zuni Creation Myth. Unhappily he died without being able to present it in complete literary form as a blank verse matrix, within which the speeches of the Beloved Gods appear in various rhythms, suited to the dramaturgic dance form in which it was performed by the priestly societies of the Ashwini. As Cushing found it, the epic consisted of a loose arrangement of episode legends, in serial form, each instalment of which was known as a "talk," and the whole series as The Speech. It begins with "the beginning of the New Made when Awanowilona (the All father father) conceived within himself and thought outward into space, whereby mists of increase, steams potent of growth, were evolved and uplifted."

The story of how the earth was prepared for man and the race of humans rescued from the Underworld by the Twins of War and Chance is too long and involved for recounting. Of the blank verse matrix which Cushing described as "faultless and often grandly poetic," he has left us some corroborative fragments, as when the Twins give direction for the performance of rites:

"Softly they chanted the sacred song measures,
The magic and dread Shomitak'ya,
And whispered the seven fell names.
Then they painted the round mark of thunder
And the wavering trail of the lightning
Around the great drum in the middle,
And on the hooped drum sticks of thunder,
And over the drumhead, with prayer dust
They marked out the cross of the quarters."

And again when the Beloved Twain take counsel together with the Sun god, by virtue of the "magic of unknowing thought"—
—"Swiftly thoughtful were they Twain, Swift of wile"—

"That the earth be made safer for men and more stable . . .
Let us lay to its circle
Our fire bolts of thunder, around all the four regions,
Then smite with our arrows of lightning from under.

Lo! the earth shall heave upward and downward with thunder!
Lo! fire shall belch outward and burn the world over!"

In rendering the speeches of the Beloved Gods, Cushing has done what must have been the only possible thing in his time—given them a regular, continuous movement, which though it clearly sets them off from the matrix, does not, I suspect, reproduce the dance measures which accompanied and controlled them. He managed to keep the significant structure of Amerind dramatic recitative, originating in, and out-carrying from, the centres of self-realization, as in the following speech of the Ancient People of the Dew.

"For long, ere ye found us,
Ye afar sought for water
Drinking dew from our Father
Like deer on the mountain,
And for long, ere ye found us,
Ye wandered in hunger,
Seeking seeds of the grasses
Like birds on the mesa."

Or again when Pautiwa, the Cloud Sender and Sun priest of souls, addresses K'yák'lu.

"As a woman with children
Is loved for her power
Of keeping unbroken
The life line of kinsfolk,
So shalt thou, tireless hearer
Of all sounds with meaning,
Be cherished among us
And worshipped of mortals
For keeping unbroken
The tale of Creation."

We recognize the saga form as it came to be chanted to the harp in Europe. But knowing the manner in which the sacred legends of the Amerind are mingled with melody and dance, I suspect that these might be more effectively rendered by means of some of the

irregular verse forms in which we modernly express the relation between emotional and motor impulses. As they stand, the mixed epic and dramaturgic forms represent an interesting phase of literary development of which we have no other examples.

There has never been any good reason offered why the episode cycle of Trojan tales should have been finally consolidated in a narrative and other Greek cycles have crystallized into drama. So there is no saying whether epic or drama would have developed out of the mixed Amerind form. There was however this distinction of great, if cloudy, significance. In the Greek it was the speeches which were first freed of melody and slowed down to conversational tempo, and the matrix which continued to be danced and sung by the chorus. In Zuni the connective parts were recited and the speech danced communally. The difference is perhaps the distinction which marked the drift of social organization in Greece towards aristocracy and autocracy, in Zuniland towards economic and political communism.

Many minds must work on the native Amerind material which Mr Cushing has furnished us before it yields all that it may have to say to the American seeker after a competent medium for poetic drama. As it stands it should have its place, a high and important place, among the world's great tribal monuments.

MARY AUSTIN

BRIEFER MENTION

THE MAN OF GOLD, by Rufino Blanco-Fombona (12mo, 319 pages; Brentano: \$2) is a sordid miser who rises for reasons quite unconnected with merit to the position of Financial Minister of Venezuela. The hands that thrust him forward are foul, and indeed with the exception of one tragic and exquisite gentlewoman of the Agualonga family, there is no one in the book whose motives rise even to the point of being merely under suspicion. Venezuela, we infer, is a disease, and this book reads like a medical report of its most virulent stage. There is a dogged, blind, but very real force which moves the story along to inevitable conclusions, but the society depicted is that of the last days of Rome, minus their splendour and lacking a height to fall from.

THE NOISE OF THE WORLD, by Adriana Spadoni (12mo, 256 pages; Boni & Liveright: \$2) is a second novel by the author of *The Swing of the Pendulum*. Against a background of capital-and-labour discords a modern love story is trumpeted with a very vigorous horn. Without rising to symphonic heights, it ends on a note of interrogation which is a plagal cadence more consonant with life than with the artistic handling of it. It nevertheless remains a novel worth reading both for its sympathetic study of industrial woes and for its analysis of some of the woes of the industrious human heart.

PROMETHEUS: THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF LIMON: SUNDAY SUNLIGHT, by Ramon Perez de Ayala, prose translated by Alice P. Hubbard, poems done into English by Grace Hazard Conkling (12mo, 224 pages; Dutton: \$2.50). Gargoyles on a Greek temple! Subtle studies in degeneracy, these three stories, for all their bitterly ironic endings, have an amazing beauty about them. They are written with a classic purity of style which still is modern, rich in colour, supple-phrased, and passionate. De Ayala moulds his characters sympathetically and then with a fatalistic twist hurls them to destruction. Pity and its kin, and a vivid horror, cling to the stories and to the introductory poems which foreshadow the mood of each chapter.

JOHN SILENCE, by Algernon Blackwood (12mo, 345 pages; Dutton: \$2.50) is a new American edition of five extraordinary tales. Blackwood has a vast knowledge of psychic lore and uses it legitimately, producing fiction of a strange and ingenious beauty—in happy contrast with Lodge and Doyle, who make of kindred materials clumsy and stupid fiction which they solemnly label truth.

THE THIRD WINDOW, by Anne Douglas Sedgwick (12mo, 154 pages; Houghton Mifflin: \$1.50) has genuine distinction, both in style and substance. The story unfolds with those delicate shadings, those sure flashes, which betoken the artist in fiction. The ending, however, does not fasten upon the imagination as does the earlier part of the book—possibly because one's sympathies refuse to travel the full course of the tragedy.

THE BOY APPRENTICED TO AN ENCHANTER, by Padraic Colum (illus., 12mo, 168 pages; Macmillan: \$1.75) is a re-told tale of the mediaeval legend of Merlin. Legends, like folk-tunes, are legitimate ground-basses for polyphonic variations. But when the variations are largely sophisticated embellishments the listener craves the sweet respite of an unadorned tune. For this reason fairy stories are about as rare as fairies—and Mr Colum's story does at least a little to people the magic race.

DIARIES OF COURT LADIES OF OLD JAPAN, translated by Annie Shepley Omori and Kochi Doi, with a preface by Amy Lowell (8vo, 201 pages; Houghton Mifflin: \$5). In this case "Old Japan" is the Japan of the year 1000, when society was *fin-de-siècle* without having discovered the modern name for the complaint. Or perhaps the period most closely resembles the France of the eighteenth century; except for a franker appreciation of romantic beauty, the diaries of these three noble ladies are remarkably similar to the letters of Madame de Graffigny or the Marquise du Deffand. Miss Lowell's preface is, as always, highly intelligent and entertaining.

HIROSHIGE, by Yone Noguchi (4to, 32 pages, 20 illustrations; Orientalia: \$7) strives to reveal the last of the great Japanese artists through the inflexible medium of western criticism. The author is not equipped for aesthetics of this sort—he is vague and pointless, and fails to understand Hiroshige's curious assimilation of western naturalism. But when he looks at his master through the "black eye of the Orient," Yone Noguchi is inspiring, and with surprising oddities of diction he discloses the mood of the eastern artist in the presence of nature. The book is beautifully printed and the reproductions are qualitatively as fine as the original prints.

ALL AND SUNDRY, by E. T. Raymond (12mo, 284 pages; Holt: \$2.25) presents the author of *Uncensored Celebrities* in another omnibus excursion amid personalities. Without attempting to drive completely around his subject, Mr Raymond has the faculty for seizing upon a salient angle capable of shrewd and entertaining treatment. Even where the sketch is but a peg on which to hang a parable, the result is provocative and sprightly.

A MODERN BOOK OF CRITICISMS, edited by Ludwig Lewisohn (16mo, 210 pages; Boni & Liveright: 95 cents) marshals a cosmopolitan army of critical crusaders, all kindled with the wish to wrest their holyland from the twin Turks of puritanism and formalism. The selections are admirably representative, concise, and stimulating.

LITERATURE IN A CHANGING AGE, by Ashley H. Thorndyke (12mo, 318 pages; Macmillan: \$3) is a scholarly analysis of nineteenth century literature and the contributing influences which made it what it was. Dr Thorndyke finds the chief Victorian motives to have been religion and social reform, with all they embraced of doubt, the growth of science, education, and the position of women. The purpose of the book is not merely to examine the recent past but to learn from it what to expect of the future. Dr Thorndyke expresses a conviction that "if criticism could accomplish this close linking of the past with the present, it might hope to go farther and chart the opportunities and invitations for future activity."

PASTORALES PARISIENNES, par Guy-Charles Cros (François Bernouard, 71 rue des Saints Péres, Paris). "The cold rain beats on the window", and perhaps only Cros can so place a line containing no more than this statement, containing no greater novelty, and still give to it the eternal freshness which is the true gauge of "the classic." Even to the title this book is a book of the "just word" and a challenge to testy old gentlemen who think that the breath of poetry ceased with Gautier, Verlaine, and Heine. The secret of Cros' genius, for by this time there is no question about its being genius and not talent or mere verbal aptitude, is perhaps in his manner of following the perfectly simple presentation of things lying daily under everybody's eye . . . following it, that is, bang into the immortal line imperturbable as Confucius.

ALCHEMY, by Robert Hilmyer (8vo, 61 pages; Brentano: \$2) is a long poem divided into four movements, like a symphony. The musical structure goes much deeper than this; there are main themes and secondary themes, and skilful restatements in a different key. Hilmyer has little to say, but he says it richly and melodiously. As a result the poem intoxicates one immediately, like a thin, heady wine; almost as soon, the ecstasy dies away, leaving no trace, not even a headache.

POEMS, by Wilfred Owen (8vo, 33 pages; Huebsch: \$1.50) contains between its narrow covers the most interesting verse, technically and emotionally, that has come out of the war. Technically the volume is important on account of the experiments in assonance and dissonance. In *The Strange Meeting*, Owen mates, quite successfully, words like "hair," "hour," and "here," or "tigress" and "progress." Emotionally he goes a step beyond Sassoon in his protest against the war. The latter poet, quite fittingly, has been chosen to write an introduction; he handles his subject cautiously, seeming to realize that he touches a greater work than his own.

MEDALLIONS IN CLAY, by Richard Aldington (12mo, 99 pages; Knopf: \$2). We are told from time to time that the Greeks knew more about love than we do. If, to-day, we sometimes involuntarily confuse *epos* with *αγαστη*, the Greeks were not open to this confusion and one knows to look in them for that in which they excelled—wit, the beauty of ritual, and the piercing quality of imagined satisfactions. Anyte of Tegea appears in this volume, less piercing, superlative, and "Homeric" than does Meleager, but we have occasionally in Meleager's *Garland*, as we have in the Latin poems of the Renaissance, supreme beauty—and, along with it, sensuality in *excelsis*. Those whom the translator designates as the unenlightened, will perhaps find Vitali's Rome, Meleager's Shipwrecked, and Anyte's *To Eros*, the most beautiful poems in the book.

REMINISCENCES OF LEO NIKOLAEVICH TOLSTOY, by Maxim Gorky, translated by S. S. Kotliansky and Leonard Woolf (12mo, 86 pages; Huebsch: \$1.50) cuts through the layers of incense-laden linen which were rapidly making the great Russian into a mummy, and shows us the man. An artist himself, Gorky is content to set down what he has discovered in terms of reality. His reactions are genuine, and the sum of these intimate stenographic notes is a full-length portrait—gnarled, brooding, and vivid.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT AND HIS TIME, by Joseph Bucklin Bishop (illus., 2 vols., 8vo, 1021 pages; Scribner: \$10) is a monument for which Roosevelt left most of the bricks. Mr Bishop has co-ordinated hundreds of letters and speeches and fashioned them into a running narrative wherein the dead ex-President tells of his life and times in his own words. It is a book that will prove of inestimable value to Roosevelt lovers, for the man they adored is to be found here emphasizing those traits that made him famous.

THE LIFE OF WHITELAW REID, by Royal Cortissoz (illus., 2 vols., 8vo, 896 pages; Scribner: \$10) involving, as it must, the national and international affairs of sixty years, cannot fail to be interesting and important. As a political record, this work is more than adequate, but as a biography it fails somewhat. It does not leave a clear impression of the personality which drew to Reid such friends as John Hay, Mark Twain, Theodore Roosevelt, and Henry Adams. The few letters of these friends and the quotations from Reid's own writings give but a tantalizing idea of what the story might be. Moreover it is told in an unfortunate manner. There are far too many sentences of spineless, even of careless structure, too many roundabout colloquialisms, to make the reading of the book anything but a discomfort.

RECREATIONS OF A PSYCHOLOGIST, by G. Stanley Hall (12mo, 366 pages; Appleton: \$2.50). A volume revealing the mind of the distinguished psychologist in its lighter moments—many of which are still heavy enough to check undue frivolity in the reader. Pleasant fragments of autobiography mingle with ventures into quasi-scientific fiction. The longest sketch, *The Fall of Atlantis*, varies the Utopian theme by picturing the complete *débauche* of an ideal commonwealth through "the nemesis of hyperdemocratization." As a whole, the volume is vaguely but disappointingly reminiscent of the excellent work done by L. P. Jacks in *Among the Idol Makers and Mad Shepherds*. Fortunately, its author's reputation is already grounded on more substantial foundations.

NATURAL HISTORY STUDIES, by J. Arthur Thomson (illus., 12mo, 244 pages; Holt: \$2). The author felicitously calls this book "an anthology of his own works." He writes with Darwinian breadth of knowledge and with poetic fervour, and presents the phenomena of the seasons, the miracle of marine life, and the wonders of growth and decay with a human touch rarely found in the biologist. The descriptions often read like odes, but are safely governed by scientific truth. The studies are collected for the elementary student, but the specialist will find them irresistible. The illustrations are of no value.

TABOO AND GENETICS, by M. M. Knight, Iva L. Peters, and Phyllis Blanchard (12mo, 301 pages; Moffat Yard: \$3) is an examination of sociological phenomena through biological spectacles. Lucidly presented, the various physiological findings of the three authors form a scientific background for their study of ancient and modern fetichisms. It is *Knowledge That Every Human Being Should Have*, and each provocative chapter is further enhanced by the addition of a complete and authoritative bibliography.

THE ACQUISITIVE SOCIETY, by R. H. Tawney (12mo, 188 pages; Harcourt, Brace: \$1.50). A typically solid English presentation of the facts and arguments in favour of a better order of things, to which the author ("Fellow of Balliol College, Oxford, Late Member of the British Coal Industry Committee") gives the name of a Functional, as opposed to an Acquisitive, Society. In the course of these pages it is irrefutably demonstrated that this would be the best of all possible worlds if every man would labour not to his own aggrandizement but to the greater glory of society: the individualistic conception of economics and politics is here the scapegoat. To sum up: The Acquisitive Society can offend no one but the obtuse conservative and the astute radical.

THE PEACE NEGOTIATIONS: A Personal Narrative, by Robert Lansing (illus., 12mo, 328 pages; Houghton Mifflin: \$3) is temperate, calm, and bitter; it must be notably bitter for those who foresaw five years ago what the former Secretary of State met and succumbed to in Paris. It is interesting to see by what small things and by what small men the hopes of the world were undone, and the book, by failing to give any cogent reason for Mr Lansing's continuance in office when he saw that the Treaty was going wrong, is the only explanation so far for Mr Wilson's failure to be dramatic when he saw the same thing. It gives the impression of being an exceptionally honest book; it is certainly important.

BOLSHEVISM: PRACTICE AND THEORY, by Bertrand Russell (12mo, 192 pages; Harcourt, Brace: \$3) is the reaction of a theoretical communist when confronted with the practical communism of Soviet Russia. Bertrand Russell has written the most courageous appraisal that has yet been made of the accomplishments of the Bolsheviki. *Bolshevist Practice* is a record of observations and contributes but little to the descriptions of Wells, Brailsford, and other observers. In *Bolshevist Theory* an attempt is made to interpret the philosophy and underlying tendencies of Bolshevism. The result is a gloomy prophecy which affords but small satisfaction to those who view Russia as the hope of the world. The conclusions of this book may be summed up as follows: three issues seem possible from the present situation. The first is the ultimate defeat of Bolshevism by the forces of Capitalism. The second is the victory of the Bolsheviki, accompanied by the complete loss of their ideals and a régime of Napoleonic imperialism. The third is a prolonged world war, in which civilization will go under and all its manifestations (including communism) will be forgotten.

COMMENT

"We seek only contact with the local conditions which confront us."

W. C. WILLIAMS

MISS ANNIE WINIFRED ELLERMAN,¹ aged twenty-six and in person astringent-sixteen, has, like some other people, a mind of her own. By way of presenting a slant on her age and sex, I might mention that she finds the author of *Ulysses* quite soft and *démodé*—"so hopelessly 1914." Miss Ellerman, it will be remarked, is, in her conviction that the world moves, at one with the Great Pisanese.

Mr Robert Menzies McAlmon is a poet, the singer of *The Blue Mandril*. He also has helped out, on off days ("My make-up emotionally and mentally is spasmodic") certain struggling artists. (Old Masters like Mr Leftwich Dodge were, on the other hand, dropped cold: "Get ye to Audrey" were Parsifal's words.) Poetically he flies too high for some of us to follow: but one recalls he drove a plane through French horizon blue and that some people could not even follow Icarus.

Miss Ellerman, chaperoned, quit Slains Castle (the Scotch seat of Sir John, her able father) for a run about the States. The Wild West, given the once over, lost caste; but Greenwich Village, after hard dredging, gave up a valuable *solitaire*. At The Rabbit's Conservatorium there was drinking of tea, and the poet-model blend appealed. Those who know what studio-life is wagged their noses: wealth remains, after all, so powerful a thing, and artist-models are, after all, so often young and human. (It is not only to young girls that studio-life is dangerous: boys also get snatched away. One recalls, readily, the affair of Ganymede, a mere country-boy, and that awful Sir Jove.) Well, in this case, thank heaven, there was nothing unsavoury. The young woman's intentions were refreshingly honourable, and, in due course, marriage ensued. So far from means assuming, in love's young equation, any unconstitutional hand, we are told that, up to the last gun, this

¹ Under the pen name of Winifred Bryher she recently published a volume entitled *Development*. It was reviewed in the May number of *THE DIAL*.

Ganymede had gone forward, as to the social and maritime (The Ellerman Lines, like Elliman's Liniment, are, among sea-faring people, one might almost say, a household word) aspect of the powerful Miss, wholly in the dark. At the City Clerk's Office (February the 14th, in that line a banner day) the cat—confessedly an immense one—got her whiskers out of the bag. But, having set hand to the plough . . .

Now it so chanced that about this season Sir John had, with his daughter's consent, purposed to slide across to Gotham. (The fact is, The Ellerman Lines run all the way over.) At first blush, to an outsider, this rings pat enough. What indeed more *dégagé*? But Mrs McAlmon is not the one 1914-ly to lie down, even before a father's blessing. It was her way to bolt on London. Having packed her boxes, battened down her bonnet, grabbed up her husband and her chaperone, she cleared out. Thanks to Cavaliere Marconi, Sir John Ellerman, large as life, was, as the little party bundled and trundled down the gangway, pointedly on dock. A drawn sword (honest Injun: see Court News, The Morning Post, Feb. 28th) furnished historical relief. The most intrepid of us have moments . . . but so soon as the illuminated kid had (with a 32 H. P. Freud drill) bored behind (in two jiffs, precisely) that nutty front, she knew—up and down and in and out—that God was on her side, that Sir John was in the mood to gulp the whole modern poet, even though that poet came, like Mr McAlmon, with *vers libres* all squirming. The fact rolled out (it didn't catch the croup waiting to) that the vigorous rooster was even then on his way to Buckingham Palace, there to receive from a markedly intelligent sovereign the Order of Companions of Honour. The Ellerman Lines, it will be recalled, during Armageddon kept plugging.

Now of course everybody knows that Robert Menzies McAlmon and William Carlos Williams are the editors and owners of Contact. (Contact, by the way, is a magazine.) The first number, which bubbled out way back last winter, announced as follows: "We seek only contact with the local conditions which confront us." However, those who kept shovelling as far as the front-cover read too, "We want . . . subsidy funds." Now if anybody guesses I am about to propose Robert McAlmon as a new hero (of that authenticated variety which, in the boots of a silver-tail prin-

cess, swallows hard and a not-too-nice-to-think-about black bear, thereby to subsidize centrally and to bolster up generally her old Dad's kingly, if skewed, head) that body errs. But Contact—even as *The Saturday Evening Post*—is printed—howsoever temperamentally—on God's own common or garden paper. And they do say the retired half-back had heard high talk of low prices in London. Wherein, as *THE DIAL* has already pointed out, this retired half-back barked up quite the wrong tree.

Yet every cloud possesses, as we are every one of us aware, a sterling silver lining. This not yet abrogated natural law here comes into action: Sir John himself here comes into play. Joint owner (with the less-said-about-him-the-better Lord Northcliffe) of the *London Times* and of one or two other unpleasant and popular sheets, Sir John remains, maugre these *impedimenta*, a man of ambition and of spirit. I here have to touch upon a rather intimate feature of the big fellow's come-day-go-day home life: I venture upon what is confessedly thin ice only because I see no other way adequately to put before you the kidney of this magnate. Are you aware that this genial controller of steamships, railways, coal-mines, motor-lorries, and West India Docks takes in his own shaving? While stopping next door (to Number One South Audley Street; *not* to Slains Castle) I used, of a fine autumn morning, to catch, emerging from the freshly-lathered pipes of that important financier, one noble and familiar verse descanted upon again and again:

"Since the sails of Greece fell slack, no ships have sailed like ours."

So what could be more natural (to us who know the hearty fellow) than the abrupt turn things have now taken? Is it then to be a subject for astonishment and for the feckless opening of feckless mouths that there should one day have leapt into the knight's face (as if from out that enchanted *Dulcinea del Toboso* pink and blue shaving mug) a twin-six idea, an idea calculated to raise considerable poetic dust? Why not enunciate, in wiping, the rest of the trochees too? "Because red-lin'd accounts Are richer than the songs of Grecian years?" Die the thought! But Sir John Ellerman is not the man to boast what he cannot make good: that

deep organ would sooner bust than swell—adown the bracken of Old Scotland or athwart the chimney-pots of Golders Green—

“Since the songs of Greece fell silent, none like ours have risen”

before Lloyd's really has turned the trick. But when the master of three hundred sea-going vessels with a combined tonnage of one million five hundred thousand puts his hand to the wheel . . .¹

And let us not forget that Robert McAlmon is as much at home in the air as is Sir John in the sea.

And let us not overlook the political implication. There has been of late a deal of light-headed talk about naval rivalry: stupid fellows have even urged us—the better to obtain a supremacy—to hock our grandmothers' ear-rings. But clever boys hit on shorter cuts. If Mr McAlmon is really taking over Lloyd's, why doesn't Mr Harding take over the British Admiralty? And why not?

There is always behind these great historic events, glorious and golden as to the poet's dream (and to the layman's) they do appear, somewhere—howsoever buried beneath the oblivion of humdrum things—at least one seamed and tragic figure. But a little time gone by and one could not anywhere happen on a copy of *Town Topics* and remain ignorant of William Carlos Williams. How often have we read of that engaging and debonair young Jersey lady-doctor and his boyish pranks? The bouncing apple of how many satined boudoirs? But all that, you see, was four months gone by. Robert McAlmon has gone to London; Contact is going to London; “local conditions” have gone to pot; and there is no joy in Jersey.

Reviewing, with a sympathetic young poetess, the whole rending affair, Dr Williams is reported quite suddenly to have broken off (and to have plunged into the night) with words which seem to indicate better than any I could use what a cut-up man the Editor of *Contact* now is: “There doesn't seem to be much honey left in life, that's a fact.” We do not even know whether he caught the last train.

¹ Permit me to refer our Missouri subscribers to Admiral Mahan: *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History, 1660-1783*. After driving, nose down, through 581 pages and 21 plates and 4 maps, they will find themselves where the rest of us—more fortunately located—now are.

